שרפת יה

OR, THE

BURNING OF LONDON

IN THE YEAR 1666.

Commemorated and improved in a CX. Diſcourſes, Meditations, and Contemplations.

Divided into four Parts, Treating of

I. The ſins, or Spiritual cauſes procuring that Judgment.

II. The Natural cauſes of Fire, morally applyed.

III. The moſt remarkable paſſages and Circumſtances of that dreadful Fire.

IV. Counſels and Comfort unto ſuch as are ſufferers by the ſaid Judgment.

BY

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LONDON,

Printed by *R. I.* for *Nathaniel Ranew*, and *Jonathan Robinſon*. 1667.

TO THE READER.

Christian Reader.

THE two first, and preliminary Discourses (as I have called them) being a genuine Preface to the ensuing Book, I might and should have forborn to have written any thing by way of Epistle, but that I was willing to tell thee what is the method, and what the design of this Treatise, not knowing but it might gratify thee, (as it useth to do my self) to have a kinde of Synopsis, or general view of the Authors drift, and scope, in, and throughout his whole Book: as also, for that I was willing to make a just Apology, for some few things, which I knew not but the more critical sort of Readers might object against; as namely, the length of the Book, the Independency of one Discourse upon another, &c. First as for the Book it self, it consists of four parts: The first of which (having dispatched those Preliminary Discour-

ſes, which are in the nature of a Preface) proceedeth to treat of all, or moſt of thoſe ſins, whereby (as Scripture informeth us) God hath been provoked firſt, and laſt, to bring the Judgment of Fire.

The ſecond part containeth ſome few ſtrictures of Philoſophy, touching the nature and Phyſical cauſes of Fire, which after the ſad and wonderful effects we have ſeen of it, one would think ſhould put every ingenious Man upon inquiry, what this ſame Fire is, which as an inſtrument in Gods hand hath done ſuch great things, and laid ſo famous a City (or the moſt of it) flat, in leſs than four days time. Some part even of the ſecond part is intelligible enough even by thoſe that are no Scholars; yet becauſe ſome paſſages therein are not to be underſtood by others, I have made that part as much ſhorter than the other three, (which they that run may read and underſtand) as the number of Perſons in *England*, that are competently Scholars, may be ſuppoſed to fall ſhort of their number that are in no wiſe ſuch, it being, though a fourth diviſion, yet not about a twelfth or fourteenth part in proportion to the bulk and bigneſs of the whole Book, and yet not without its moral applications neither, eaſie enough to be underſtood.

The

The third part reflecteth upon all the remarkable paſſages, and circumſtances, of the late dreadful Fire, (which the Author could well think, or inform himſelf of,) endeavouring to make ſome practical uſe and improvement of all or moſt of them: as alſo glanceth at ſome few other things, either paſſages of Scripture, or otherwiſe, that ſeem cognate, or to have competent affinity with the ſubject in hand, as namely thoſe analogical Fires (if I may ſo term them) which we read of in Holy Writ, *viz.* The Tongues of Men, the Word of God, and the Heavenly Angels, &c.

The fourth and laſt part is wholly and only converſant in wholeſome Counſels, and ſure Foundations of ſupport, and comfort, calculated, and propoſed, for the direction, and conſolation of thoſe that are under any kinde of ſufferings; but more particularly under this, *viz.* by the late Fire.

Having given you this bill of fare (if I may ſo call it) or account of what you are here to expect, ſuffer me to do my ſelf that right, as to prevent (ſo far as I may) ſome obvious (and yet I hope) groundleſs objections, which the more ſevere ſort of Readers, may be inclined to make againſt the inſuing Treatiſe. Some I doubt will ſay it is too long

and may fear it will tire them ere they get to the end of it. Such may please to consider that so long a judgment (as I may call it in reference to the consequences of it, though not to the continuance of the Fire its self) could scarce be solemnly enough commemorated by a short Discourse, nor would a Book that might presently be perused, cause Men and Women to dwel long enough upon the remembrance of such a Calamity as that, which ought never to be forgotten. Moreover, Discourses to the number of a hundred and upwards (which number hath been occasioned, much-what, by the desire I had to gather up all the fragments (circumstances I mean) of this Judgment, that nothing might be lost) could not easily be couched or contained in a very small room. And as for matter of tiring or wearying your selves, with the prolixity of this Book, I think that need not be, if you will but rest and pause a while at every stage, there being above a hundred stages, or resting places, (for each particular Meditation and Discourse, I reckon to be such) where you may take breath, and refresh your selves, as long as you please, before you proceed in your journey, and upon such termes even pthisical and short wind-

winded perſons are able to travel, were it a hundred miles an end.

Some it may be, will think I have reflected too much upon the Popiſh party (or rather upon ſome of them:) in relation to the Fire: others again, that I have reflected upon them too little, not poſitively and confidently enough. To the former, give me leave to ſay, that if I have here and there inſinuated, that ſome of the ſame Religion with thoſe that did hatch the 5. of *November* Powder-Plot, (I ſay ſome, not all, nor it may be the moſt of them) are ſtrongly preſumed, and vehemently ſuſpected to have had a hand in the burning of *London*; it is but what moſt of thoſe Treatiſes concerning the late fire that I have ſeen, (which got into the World before this, though this were almoſt ready for the birth long ſince.)

I ſay it is but what the moſt of them have given ſhrewd intimations of; ſo that I am not the firſt that hath entertained any ſuch hard thoughts concerning ſome of them, nor do believe I ſhall be the laſt. Manifeſt it is that *Hubert*, (for ſo was his name that confeſſed himſelf guilty of the burning of *London*, and was executed at Tyburn for it) did die in the profeſſion of the Romiſh faith. For that he earneſtly denyed himſelf to have

have been a *Hugonite*; did declare that he did believe confeſſion to a Prieſt was neceſſary to his ſalvation, and was accordingly confeſſed by a Popiſh Prieſt, and did make uſe of *Avie Maries*, for his uſual prayer. Had he not been of that perſwaſion before the commiſſion of this fact, or had he been really a mad-man, Papiſts would have been well conten that ſo infamous and odious a Perſon ſhould have profeſſed himſelf a *Hugonite*, at his death, neither would they have been ambitious to have proſelited either ſo great a Malefactor (as others account him) or one that was really mad. To imagine he ſhould do ſuch a thing without inſtigation from others, (yea without the combination and conſpiracy of others joyning with him) is no leſs beſides reaſon, than (if I miſtake not) contrary to his own confeſſion. If the Committee of Parliament which were appointed to examine how the Fire came, and was carryed on, did manifeſt no ſmall jealouſie, that it was by Popiſh treachery (after they had received the teſtimonies and informations of many ſufficient witneſſes, as in reference to the Fire) yea if the Parliament its ſelf, did ſince the Fire manifeſt a greater zeale and hotter diſpleaſure againſt the Papiſts than ever before, publiſhing to the

the World that they had been filled with complaints of the great Inſolencies of the Papiſts in ſeveral Counties; and if it be well known to many, that many Romaniſts have been very jocund and full of triumph ſince that Fire (as who ſhould ſay, ah, ah, ſo they would have it, or as one brings them in, ſaying *Ah, this hit better than the Powder-plot.*) I ſay if all theſe things may not warrant ſo much as a rational ſuſpicion that more Catholicks than that one that was executed for it, did promote the burning of *London:* I ſay, if from hence we have not a ſufficient ground to ſuſpect ſome of thoſe who are the enemies of Proteſtants as ſuch (and vehement ſuſpicion is all I have inſinuated, leaving it to God in his due time, to make a further diſcovery of that matter, one way or other) let me paſſe for vainly cenſorious, which yet methinks I ſhould not, when ſo great Authors have appeared to have the ſame ſentiments and ſuſpicions. Moreover when the Papiſts falſely ſay in their Apology, that he was a *Hugonite* Proteſtant, that ſaid he burnt the City (throwing the Odium of ſuch an action upon Proteſtants) (yet ſeeming tender of charging him too deep, in that they really abſolve him as to the fact, whilſt they accuſe him of a vain, that is falſe confeſſion (which had

had they taken him for a Proteſtant, they would ſcarce have done;) why may not we ſay (as the truth is) that he was a profeſſed Papiſt, and that at his very death? at which time Men leaſt dare to diſſemble. Yet on the other hand, I am poſitive and abſolute in charging no Man with the guilt of that fire, whom the Law its ſelf hath not charged with and condemned for it; nay I ſhall go further than ſo, and ſay, that if I ſhould ever be ſure that no more Papiſts than one had a hand in it, I ſhould be heartily ſorry that I ever harboured a miſtruſtful thought of any more of them, upon that account. I am or would be as earneſtly deſirous that all Papiſts may appear innocent in this particular, in caſe they be ſo, as manifeſtly guilty, if they be guilty indeed: neither would I that a hair of any of their heads ſhould be ſinged for the burning of *London*, unleſs it can be proved demonſtratively that it was burnt by their meanes. As for a bare ſuſpicion that they did it, they deſerve, and invite no leſs, by manifeſting a great deale of joy (as ſome of them are ſaid to have expreſſed) ſince the time it was done.

Some it may be will wiſh, that more of connection and dependency, (*viz.* of one Chapter upon another) had been made uſe

of

of, than is in ſome part of this Treatiſe; but as to that, it is well known (if it be but as well conſidered) that books of this nature, *viz.* conſiſting of various Meditations and reflections, are uſually Miſcellaneous, and like books of *Proverbs*, in which little coherence is to be found (witneſs the *Proverbs of Solomon*) which in the Hebrew Language are called משלי or Kingly ſayings, therefore haply becauſe each of them hath a kind of independent Juriſdiction, and territory to its ſelf; or we may compare both Proverbs and Meditations to Beads, which though many of them hang upon one and the ſame ſtring, yet each of them is incohering and intire of its ſelf.

I fear leaſt ſome ſhould be offended (if not fore-warned) at my taking ſuch a liberty (and that but now and then) as did the Prophet *Elijah*, when he ſpake Ironically to *Baals* Prophets, 1 *King.* 18. 27. where the Text ſaith, *Elijah* mocked them and ſaid, *Cry aloud, for he is a God, either he is talking, or he is purſuing, or he is in a journey, or he ſleepeth, and muſt be awaked.* If this were no levity in that good Prophet, (as doubtleſs it was not) why ſhould it be counted ſo in others, when with like ſarcaſmes they reflect upon Idolaters (or worſhippers of graven

graven Images) who ought to be cuttingly reproved (ἀποτόμως) and for that purpose, I hope we may be allowed something of an edge.

Lastly, some it may be (if not prevented) will censure me for prefixing more names than one, of my worthy and honoured friends to this little book (at leastwise for so doing before each of the four parts and divisions of it.) But I am conscious to my self that a grateful sense of their respects and favours towards me (which is usually testified in such a way as this, and which at present I knew not how to testifie to the world otherwise) was my great, if not onely inducement so to do; and if to be grateful be a fault, as *David* said, when *Michal* scoffed at him, *he would be yet more vile*; so give me leave to say, I must be grateful still, and yet more grateful, if I knew how to be so: Onely mistake me not, as if in so saying, I did threaten the world with another Book, for if I had resolved to clog the Press, it is like I should have reserved to another opportunity several of these names which I have now inserted (as it were *in album amicorum.*) If I have erred in multiplicity of Dedications, it is not without president from that great master of Contem-

temptations, Biſhop *Hall* (of precious memory) whoſe practice (if I miſtake not) is ſufficient to authorize, at leaſt to excuſe in me a matter of this nature. *Reader*, if thou think there be here and there a paſſage that wants a grain or two of that ſadneſs which thou didſt deſire ſhould have been uſed upon this occaſion, do what thou wilt with it, provided only, that whereſoever thou doſt meet with convincing rebukes, and expreſſions awakening to Repentance, with ſerious obſervations, with ſeaſonable counſels, with right methods for acquiring true happineſs and comfort (even under ſuch a ſtroke as this.) I ſay, provided where thou meeteſt with any ſuch things as thoſe throughout this booke, thou wilt receive ſuch truths in the love of them. Praiſe ſhall wait for God, from the mouth and heart of his poor ſervant, the Author of this work, if he ſhall hear of any good that ſhall be done by theſe his mean labours; which God forbid that he ſhould ſin in ceaſing to ſecond with his earneſt prayers, that (aſſiſted by the ſpirit of God) they may kindly co-operate together with the late judgment (and all others) upon the heart both of the writer and readers. The Author doubts not, but there is a great

great deale of hay and ſtubble in the ſuper-ſtructure of this work of his (as in and with all other his performances (and it may be thine too, though not ſo much,) Pray for the pardon of his defects and miſcarriages, (as he would do of thine) cover them with love(which co[v]ereth a multitude of infirmities) if there be any paſſage in this work, one or more that God ſhall make to thee as Gold, Silver, or precious Stones, give God the glory of it (for he it is muſt make it ſo) and take to thy ſelf theſe following words on the unworthy Author his behalf, *viz.* that though all that hay and ſtubble which is found upon him, or upon any ſervice of his, muſt be burnt up, yet himſelf may be ſaved, though as by Fire: in which and all other needfull requeſts, he deſireth heartily to reciprocate [w]ith thee, who is

Yet an unprofitable Servant to Chriſt and his Church, but deſirous to be otherwiſe.

S. R.

The

THE
Heads of the enſuing Diſcourſes, Meditations, and Contemplations.

PART. I.

Diſcourſes

1. *Of the great duty of Conſidering, in an evil time.*
2. *Of Gods being a conſuming Fire.*

Meditations

1. *Of the ſins for which God ſent Fire upon* Sodom *and* Gomorrah.
2. *Of deſtroying Fire, procured by offering ſtrange Fire.*
3. *Of Fire enkindled by murmuring.*
4. *Of Rebellion againſt* Moſes *and* Aaron, *procuring a deſtructive Fire, Numb. 16.*
5. *Of Sabbath-breaking, mentioned in Scripture, as one great cauſe of Gods puniſhing a people by Fire.*
6. *Of Gods contending by Fire, for the ſins of Idolatry and Superſtition.*
7. *Of Oppreſſion, Theft, Deceit, falſe Ballances, mentioned in Scripture, as cauſes of Gods contending by Fire.*
8. *Of lying, ſwearing and forſwearing, as further cauſes of Gods contending by Fire.*
9. *Of the abounding of Drunkenneſs, as one cauſe of the Fire.*

Meditations
10 *Of Gods punishing a People by Fire, for their great unprofitableness.*
11. *Of the universall Corruption and Debauchery of a people, punished by God with Fire.*
12. *Of Gods bringing Fire upon a people for their incorrigibleness under other Judgments.*
13. *Of the Aggravations of the sins of* London.

PART. II.

Contemplations
1. *Concerning the Nature of Fire, and the use that may be made of that Contemplation.*
2. *Touching the Nature of Sulphur, which is the principal matter and cause of Fire, and how it comes to be so mischievous in the World.*
3. *Concerning the true cause of Combustibility, or what it is that doth make Bodies obnoxious to fire: together with the improvement of that consideration.*
4. *Of Fire kindled by Fire.*
5. *Of Fire kindled by Putrefaction.*
6. *Of Fire kindled by the collision of two hard bodies.*
7. *Of Fire kindled for want of vent, as in Hay, &c.*
8. *Of Fire kindled by pouring on Water, as in Lime.*

PART III.

Meditations

1. OF *the weight of Gods hand in the deſtruction of* London *by fire.*
2. *Upon ſight of the weekly Bill ſince the fire.*
3. *Upon the diſcourſes occaſioned by the late fire, both then and ſince.*
4. *Upon the diſhoneſt Carters that exacted exceſſive rates.*
5. *Upon thoſe that ſtole what they could in the time of the fire.*
6. *Upon unconſcionable Land-lords demanding exceſſive Fines and Rents, ſince the Fire.*
7. *Upon the burning down of many Churches.*
8. *Upon the burning multitudes of Books of all ſorts.*
9. *Upon the burning of the* Royal Exchange.
10. *Upon the burning of Hoſpitals, and Rents thereunto belonging.*
11. *Upon the burning of publick Halls.*
12. *Of the burning of publick Schools.*
13. *Upon the burning of Tombs and Graves, and dead bodies that were buried therein.*
14. *Upon the burning of Writings, as Bils, Bonds, &c.*
15. *On the burning of St.* Pauls *Church and the unconſumed body of Biſhop* Brabrooke.
16. *Upon the viſibleneſs of Gods hand, in the deſtruction of* London.
17. *Upon burning of the* Seſſions-houſe *in the* Old-Baily.
18. *On the Gates and Priſons of* London *that were burnt.*
19. *Upon the Conflagration of the Univerſe.*
20. *Upon the Fire of Hell.*

Meditations

21. *Upon the coming of that most dreadful Fire in so idolized a year as* 1666.
22. *Upon the Fire its beginning on the Lords day.*
23. *Upon the place where this dreadful Fire began,* viz. *at a Bakers-house in* Pudding-lane.
24. *Upon the great pitty that ought to be extended to Londoners since the Fire.*
25. *Upon those that have lost all by the Fire.*
26. *On those that have lost but half their Estates by this Fire, or some such proportion.*
25. *Upon those that have lost nothing by the Fire.*
26. *Upon those that were gainers by the late Fire.*
27. *Upon the enducements unto rebuilding of* London, *and some waies of promoting it.*
28. *Upon the Wines and Oile that swam in the streets, and did augment the flames.*
29. *Upon the water running down hill so fast, as that they could not stop it for their use.*
30. *Upon mens being unwilling there should be no Fire, though Fire hath done so much hurt.*
31. *Upon the usefulness of Fire in its proper place, and the danger of it elsewhere.*
32. *Upon the blowing up of houses.*
31. *Upon preventing the beginning of evils.*
32. *Upon the City Ministers, whose Churches were saved from the fire.*
33. *Upon those Ministers, whose Churches were burned.*
34. *Upon the killing of several people, by the fall of some parts of ruinous Churches.*
35. *Upon the Fire, its not exceeding the Liberties of the City.*
36. *Upon the Suburbs comming into more request than ever since the Fire.*
37. *Upon the Tongue its being a Fire, &c.*

38. *Upon*

Meditations

38. *Upon the Angels, their being called flames of fire.*
39. *Upon the Word of God, its being compared to Fire.*
40. *Upon the ſpoiling of Conduits, and other Aqueducts, by this Fire.*
41. *Upon the retorts and reproaches of Papiſts occaſioned by this Fire.*
42. *On the pains which the Kings Majeſty is ſaid to have taken, in helping to extinguiſh the Fire.*
43. *Upon meer Worldlings, who loſt their All by this Fire.*
44. *Upon that forbearance which it becometh Citizens to uſe one towards another, ſince the Fire.*
45. *Upon ſuch as are ſaid, or ſuppoſed to have rejoyced, at the comming and conſequences of this Fire.*
46. *Of the burning of* Sodom *and* Gomorrah, *compared with the burning of* London.
47 *Of the burning of* Troy, *compared with the burning of* London.
48. *Upon the burning of* Jeruſalem, *compared with that of* London.
49. *Upon people taking the firſt and greateſt care, to ſave thoſe things from the Fire which they did moſt value.*
50. *Of people ſcarce knowing where their houſes ſtood, ſoon after the Fire.*
51. *Of the Statue of Sir* Thomas Greſham, *left ſtanding after the Fire, in the* Old Exchange.
52. *Of the Pillar of Braſs or Stone, appointed to be erected in remembrance of the Fire.*
53. *Of the Anniverſary Faſt, perpetually to be obſerved in remembrance of the Fire.*
54. *Of the burning of* Sion-Colledge.
55. *Of Citizens dwelling in Booths, or Houſe like Booths,*

Meditations

Booths, as in Moor-fields, *&c.*

56. *Of certain Timber-houses, and other sleight buildings, at which the Fire stopt, as in* Smith-field. *&c.*

57. *Upon the warning which other places may and ought to take by the burning of* London.

Reader, take notice that through mistake, the *Numbers* 25, 26, 31 & 32. in the third part, are twice printed, which makes them end with 57. instead of 61.

PART IV.

Discourses

1. *OF Deliverance under losses and troubles, as well as out of them.*

2. *Of this, that the life of man consists not in the abundance of what he possesseth.*

3. *Of the Lessons of an afflicted estate well learnt, their making way for prosperity to ensue.*

4. *Of being content with Food and Rayment.*

5. *Of the way to be assured of Food and Rayment.*

6. *Of a good conscience being a continual feast.*

7. *Of getting, and living upon a stock of spiritual comfort.*

8. *Of its being a great mercy to most Men, that their lives are continued, though their livelihoods are greatly impaired.*

9. *Of the comfort that may be received by doing good more than ever.*

10. *Of abstracting from fancy, and looking at those that are below our selves, rather than at others.*

11. *Of*

Discourses

11. *Of neer Relations and Friends, being greater comforts each to other than they had wont to be.*
12. *Of training up children in Religion, that they may come to have God for their portion.*
13. *Of that comfort under trouble, which may be drawn from the consideration of Gods nature.*
14. *Of drawing the waters of comfort under affliction out of the Wells of Gods Promises.*
15. *Of fetching comfort, from the usual proceedings of God, with his people, in and under affliction.*
16. *Of that relief and support which the commonness of the case of affliction may afford us.*
17. *Of the lightness of all temporal afflictions.*
18. *Of the shortness of temporal Afflictions.*
19. *Of the needfulness and usefulness of Affliction.*
20. *Of the mixture of mercies with judgments.*
21. *Of the Discommodities of Prosperity, and Benefits of Affliction.*
22. *Of the gracious ends and intendments of God in afflicting his people.*
23. *Of Resignation to God, and acquiescing in his good pleasure.*
24. *Of taking occasion by this, to study the vanity and uncertainty of all earthly things.*
25. *Of not being too eager upon the world, after this great loss.*
26. *Of chusing rather to continue under affliction, than to escape by sin.*
27. *Of preparing for our own dissolution, now we have seen the destruction of* London.

Next to this, place the Title Part I. and the Epistle to the Earl of *Northumberland*.

PRELIMINARY DISCOURSES: AND Meditations OF THE SINS FOR Which God hath first and last brought THE JUDGMENT OF FIRE,

PART I.

By *SAMUEL ROLLE*
Minister of the Word, and sometime Fellow of *Trinity Colledge* in *Cambridge*.

LONDON,
Printed by *R. I.* for *Tho. Parkhurst*. *Nath. Ranew*, and *Jonathan Robinson*, 1667.

PRELIMINARY DISCOURSES.

I.

Which God hath ſtrictly and ſtraitly forbidden.

II.

PART I.

To the Right Honorable

ALGERNOON,

Earl of *Northumberland*, Baron *Percy*, *Poinings*, *Fitz-pain*, and *Bryan*, Knight of the most noble Order of the *Garter*, and one of his Majesties most honourable Privy Counsel.

To the Right Honorable

EDWARD

Earl of *Manchester*, Baron of *Kimbolton*, Knight of the most noble Order of the Garter, Chamberlain of his Majesties Houshold; and one of his Majesties most honourable Privy Counsel.

AND

To the Right Honourable

Sir THOMAS INGRAM

Chancellor of the *Dutchy*, and one of his Majesties most honourable Privy Counsel.

S. R.

Sometime Minister of Thistleworth, *and your Honours much obliged Servant, humbly dedicateth the ensuing Discourses and Meditations, with Apprecation of all Grace and Happiness.*

To the Right Honorable

ALGERNOON

To the Right Honorable

D A R D

To the Right Honourable

Sir THOMAS INGRAM

K. P.

Preliminary Discourses.

DISCOURSE I.

Of the great duty of Considering in an evil time.

HE that would see my Commission for engaging in the work of meditation at such a time as this (in which few men know what to do, or say, or think) may read it in those words of *Salomon, Eccles.* 7. 14. *But in the day of Adversity consider.* Times of extraordinary trouble, as they afford most matter to the Pen of an Historian, so likewise to the mind and heart of an observing Christian. Not considering in such times, is called, not seeing the hand of God when it is lifted up, or refusing to see it, (For the word translated here consider, is in the Hebrew ראה that is, see.) Now saith the Prophet, *They will not see when thy hand is lifted up: but they shall see, and be ashamed, &c. Yea the fire of thine enemies shall devour them. Isa.* 26. 11. Wherefore is it that God doth call upon his people *to enter into their chambers, shut their doors upon them, hide themselves till the indignation be overpast, for the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquities. Isa.* 26. 20. Is it not that men might then and there consider what God hath done, and is

doing? He can do little in his chamber, as a christian (that might not be done elsewhere) that knows not how to meditate and pray there: nor can the latter be well performed without the former. Therefore the Psalmist doth well joyn those two together, *Psal.*19.14. saying, *Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord.* Sure I am, Affliction calls for a great deal of seriousness, even to a degree of sadness. *James* 5.1. *Go to now you rich men, weep and howl for your miseries which shall come upon you.* And should they not weep as much for those that are come upon them already, and can no waies be prevented? Now great seriousness there cannot be, where there is no musing, and considering; and wheresoever considering is (such as ought to be) there must needs be seriousness. I shall think that man despiseth the chastening of the Lord (which is strictly forbidden *Heb.*12.5.) who is not thereby put upon considering such things as are behoovefull for him, and suteable to the circumstances under which he is. So much is hinted to us by these words, *Isa.* 5.12. *They regarded not the work of the Lord, neither consider the operation of his hands.* Methinks the punishment threatned in that case, seems to speak that there is contempt of God in the sin (I said I only threatned, yea executed.) For there is not only a woe to such *v.*11. but in the 13. verse is added, *Therefore my people are gone into captivity.* And *v.*14. *Therefore hell hath inlarged her self, and their glory, and their multitude shall descend into it.* Doubtless it is a great sin in Gods account that procures so great a punishment. Who can perform the grand

grand duties of an afflicted state without considering? who must not of necessity consider (and as the Poet calls it, *in sese descendere*, go down into himself) if he will search and try his wales, and turn to the Lord, as that afflicted Church is exhorted to do, *Lam.*3.40. But surely that proof is *ex abundanti*, which is more than the express command in the first cited text, and in others parallel with it. *Deut.*8.5. Thou shalt consider, that as a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord chasteneth thee: where both the matter and manner of their chastisement seemeth to be proposed to their consideration, *viz.* that God had punished them, and how. But I have produced these proofs rather as motives to excite our wills and affections to so hard a work, than as arguments to prove so easie and manifest a truth.

If the question be put, what are the things we should consider of in an evil day? it must here receive but a general answer, for to answer it particularly, and with reference to that amazing judgment by fire, which lately befell the great City, will be the drift and substance of all our ensuing Meditations and Discourses? Yet I shall venture so far forth to prevent my self, and anticipate what is behind, as to say, that it is our duty in an evil day to consider, first, what may make for our own humiliation, and principally these two things, *viz.* the greatness of our own sins. *Lam.*1.8. *Jerusalem hath grievously sinned, therefore she is removed.* Also the greatness of the judgments of God that are upon us. (For as sins, so judgments ought not to be extenuated.) *Lam.*4.6. *The punishment of the daughter of*

my people, is greater than the punishment of the sin of Sodom, that was overthrown in a moment. Secondly, what may make for the vindication of God, as just and righteous in all that he hath done against us. To that purpose are the ensuing expressions of Scripture, *Job* 34.23. *God will not lay upon man more than is right, that he should enter into judgment with him.* *Pharaoh* himself could say, *The Lord is righteous, but I and my people are wicked.* And this was when God rained down haile and fire upon him. *Exod.* 9.27. and so said *Rehoboam*, when *Shishak* came against him, 2 *Chron.*12.2. Shall such as they justifie God, and shall not we? saying with the Prophet *Jeremy*, *Lam.*1.18. *The Lord is righteous, for I have rebelled, &c.* And as he elsewhere, *Man for the punishment of his sin.* And then the causes of our Afflictions, those we should also consider of, remembring that trouble springs not out of the dust. We should look at God as the efficient cause of all out miseries. *Lam.* 2.17. *The Lord hath done that which he hath devised, he hath thrown down, and hath not pitied*; and in that Chapter we finde the hand of God owned in every verse for ten verses together.

Neither is it less needful to consider what are the meritorious and procuring causes of all our miseries. So *Lam.*3.42. *We have transgressed and rebelled, thou hast not pardoned.* And *Lam.*1.6. *Jerusalem remembred not her last end, therefore she came down wonderfully.* Nor may we forget the final cause, or Gods primary end in sending them (which is of all the rest most comfortable to consider.) So saith *Moses* to the Israelites, *Deut*, 8.2. *Thou shalt remember the way which the*

Lord

Lord thy God led thee, this forty years in the Wilderness to humble thee, and to prove thee, &c. Also, *Heb.* 12. 10. *But he chasteneth us for our profit, that we might be made partakers of his holiness.* Again, we ought to consider, what are the duties that are incumbent on us in a time of Adversity; what is the Law, and the Decorum of that condition; and how we ought to behave our selves under the rod of the Almighty, *viz.* Humbly, Patiently, Circumspectly, &c. of which we shall have occasion to discourse more fully hereafter. The next thing to be considered at such a time, is, how and wherewithall we may be able to support and bear up our own hearts, and the hearts of others in an evil day. *David* saith, *Psal.* 119. 50. *This is my comfort in my affliction, for thy word hath quickned me.* Which may be thus construed, that it was a comfort to him in his afflictions, to think that the Word of God had been a quickning and inlivening word to him, which to many others is but as a dead letter. One end of Gods vouchsafing us his Word, is said to be, *that we through patience and comfort in the Scripture might have hope, Rom* 15. 4. and that we should endeavour to comfort others, is evident, from 2 *Cor.* 1. 4. where God is said, *to comfort his people in all their tribulations, that they may be able to comfort others that are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith themselves are comforted of God.* One thing more I think of, that should be considered by us in a time of adversity; but shall not presume to say that and the rest I have mentioned, are all; and that is, how and by what means we may in Gods way, and without sin, in Gods due time obtain deliverance, as

Paul in another case cries out, *who shall deliver?* we read in 1 *Cor.* 10, 13. that *God will together with the temptation also make a way to escape.* How to finde out a way of escaping, is the care of all men, or of the most, but how to finde out that way which God hath made for our escape (which is alwaies a lawful and a regular way,) that should fall under our consideration; as also how to avoid and shun all other waies of escaping, though ever so easie to us. Now have we so many things to consider of in an evil day? then O my soul here is work for thee, as much as ever thou canst turn thy self to; Gird up thy loines and set about it. Now if ever, is a time for serious consideration, for who knows not that it is a time of great adversity and rebuke, and needs it must, when the most famous City in these three Kingdoms (that was lately such) is become a very ruinous heap, Now *London*, the glory of three renowned Kingdoms, is made almost like unto *Sodom* and to *Gomorrah*. Surely that man hath lost his thinking faculty, that cannot think of this; and he that is not sensible of it, is past all feeling, and seared as with a hot Iron. O my soul, I scarce know what to think of thee, that thou hast considered this no more: Much less know I what to think of those that have not considered it so much, as seeming to think of nothing else, but how they may make provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof. How many thought they could have said when time was, If I forget thee O *London*, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, which yet have almost forgotten poor *London*? and now God hath burned it round about, scarce lay it to their hearts. Methinks

we are in an age in which are more *Pharaohs* than of any other sort of men; infinite wisdome, can scarce invent judgments that will awaken and make us look about us, and consider. The Iron age is a name too good for us. Fire with the addition of some small matter besides, as vinegar, &c. will melt Iron, but will not melt us, it will make that capable of any impression, or to be cast into any mould, but it will not do so by us.

Lord I see the heart of man will yield to nothing but thy self. It can play with judgments and plagues, though they were greater than those which came upon *Pharaoh*, and so far forth contemn them as scarce seriously to consider of them, at leastwise when past and gone. Nor yet whilst present, and incumbent as they ought to do. Thou who hast created a day of great adversity, such as we never lookt for, create I beseech thee in me, and in others, a heart duly to consider it, and together with it, the things that do belong both to our present, and future, to our temporal and eternal peace.

DISCOURSE II.

Of God's being a consuming Fire.

THree several times do I call to mind the holy Scripture, saying expresly (besides what it mentioneth elsewhere to the same effect) that our God is a consuming Fire, twice in the old Testament, and once in the new. First by way of caution, *Deut.* 4. 23, 24. *Take heed to your selves, least you forget the Covenant of the Lord your God,*

which he hath made with you, and make you a graven Image, or the likeness of any thing, which the Lord thy God hath forbidden thee. For the Lord thy God is a consuming Fire, even a jealous God. Secondly, by way of comfort, *Deut.* 9. 3. *The Lord thy God is he which goeth over before thee as a consuming Fire,* (meaning) to their enemies, as the next words do show, he shall destroy them, *viz.* those children of *Anak*, of whom they had learn'd to say who can stand before them? *vers.* 2. them and their Cities great and tenced up to Heaven, as they are called, *vers.* 1. Thirdly by way of counsel or positive exhortation unto serving God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear, *Heb.* 12. 28. For saith the text, *vers.* 29. Our God *is a consuming Fire.* And well may God be so stiled, not only *effectivè*, as he is the first cause and authour of all those fires that consume houses, Towns, and Cities, as God is pleased to own, *Isa.* 42. 25. *That he had set Jacob and Israel on fire round about*, not careth the great God who knowes, yea he would have all the World to know that all evil of punishment, as such, and so far forth as it is only such is from himself, *Amos* 3. 6. *Shall there be evil in a City, and the Lord hath not done it?* But not only in that sense may God be called a consuming Fire, for that he is so *efficienter* (as Christ upon such, an accompt is called the resurrection and the life) but also and chiefly because the fire, of all Elements, yea of all inanimate creatures, seemes to bear the greatest resemblance of God, in respect of more than one of his glorious attributes, as namely of his irresistible power, his awfull presence, and affrighting Majesty, his impartial and devouring severity, his consuming anger, &c.

Of

Of the ſtrength and power of Fire.

What creature here below ſo powerfull as fire? who or what can ſtand before it? how applicable unto fire are many of thoſe expreſſions, whereby God in his anſwer to *Job*, ſets forth ſome of the moſt untameable creatures, as that which is ſpoken of the wilde Aſs, *Job* 39. 7. *He ſcorneth the multitude of the City.* Did not the fire do ſo? and that of God, concerning *Behemoth*, *Job* 41. 4. *Will he make a Covenant with thee? wilt thou take him for a ſervant for ever?* Who can maſter fire, though it be never good, but when it is as a ſervant? alſo in ſome ſenſe thoſe words in the 27. *verſ.* may be applied to this powerful Element. *It eſteemeth Iron as ſtraw, and Braſs as rotten wood*: alſo thoſe words in the laſt verſe. *He beholdeth all high things, He is a King over all the children of pride.* Methinks ſome lofty expreſſions which are uſed concerning God himſelf, are more applicable to fire, than to any other creature. It is ſaid of God, *Iſa.* 40. 15. *That he taketh up the Iſlands as a very little thing.* So doth fire, though not whole Iſlands, yet things of great bulk, as houſes, Churches, and ſuch like, which are eaſily blown up by it, as it were at one breath or puff. It darts them up into the aire in an inſtant, like a fleete arrow ſhot from a ſtrong bow. Cranes though made on purpoſe to mount heavy things, yet are long in doing it, yea ſeem to ſqueek and groan in raiſing one great beam at a time, as if the burthen were more than they could well bear, whereas this Giant Fire, if I may ſo call it, makes nothing of it to take whole houſes upon its back, with all their weighty beames, maſſy ſtones, leaden rooſes, lum-

lumbering goods, and mount them into the aire presently. Moreover it is said of God, *verſ.* 16. *That Lebanon is not ſufficient for him to burn, nor the beaſts thereof, ſufficient for a burnt offering.* Surely *London* was far before *Lebanon*, and yet when the moſt of it was burnt up, did the fire ſay it was enough? Could not that ravenous Lion have devoured the Suburbs preſently, with as great an appetite, as it had done the City, if the great God had not ſtopt its mouth, or plucke away its prey?

Doth not *Solomon* rank fire amongſt the Cormorants that are never ſatisfied, *Prov.* 30. 16. Who can write (or almoſt think) what Fire can do? what building ſo high, (be it beacon or ſteeple) that fire cannot preſently climbe to the top of it? What mettle ſo hard that fire cannot melt it, ſuch as the fire may be? It was only for haſt that it left the out-ſides of Churches ſtanding, pickt out the meat as it were, and left the bones untouched. In length of time it could have ſo calcined thoſe bricks and ſtones, as to have made them good for nothing, but ready like the Apples of *Sodom*, preſently to crumble to duſt. But ſhould I think of all that fire can do, *I* muſt think of nothing elſe. *I* leſs wonder at thoſe Heathens that did worſhip fire, than at thoſe who worſhiped any other creature, ſith no viſible creature is ſo great an embleme, or ſo lively a picture of the power of God. Yet did they very ill to worſhip it, ſith the power of fire (though great) is but finite, and as much tranſcended by the power of God, as it ſelf tranſcends the power of other things.

If

Of the Power of God transcending the power of Fire.

If a little Fire, one ſingle Fire, taking its riſe, (it may be) but from a ſpark or two, can do ſuch great things, what cannot he do who made all the Fires in the World, and that of Topher or Hell to boot! which is greater than all the reſt, *the Pile whereof is much wood, and the breath of the Lord, like a mighty ſtreame of brimſtone kindleth it. Iſa.* 30.33. How powerfull is he that hath all the Fires in the World at his beck, ready to execute his pleaſure? *Pſal.* 148.8. *Fire and haile fulfilling his Word.* He that hath an hoſt of fires wherewith to fight his battles, and avenge his quarrel, can eaſily incounter all his enemies, if all the World were ſuch. If it be made appear that the power of God be far beyond that of all the fires in the World, who then can deny his power to be incomparably greate? and that it is ſo, we may plainly ſee, for that God ſuſpends the influence of fire at his pleaſure. Witneſs the three Children, who though in midſt of a burning fiery furnace, yet not *ſo much as a haire of their heads was ſinged, nor had the ſmell of fire paſſed upon them, Dan.* 3.27. He can do more than fire, who can ſo limit fire its ſelf, that it can do juſt nothing. God forbid *I* ſhould adore fire, as the heathen did: but he that can do what he will by fire or without fire, yea againſt Fire it ſelf, he I ſay muſt needs be worthy of humbleſt adoration; and that in reference to his power.

Of the dreadfulneſs and terribleneſs of fire.

Neither do we ſee in Fire a repreſentation of the power of God only, but alſo of his awfull and terrifying preſence. If we do but hear people crying out, either by day or night Fire, Fire, how doth it affright us, as if a potent enemy were at

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our Gates! but if we come and ſee it is ſo indeed, and that we are not abuſed with a falſe alarme, how much more terrour doth that ſtrike us with? (our eyes then affecting our hearts, and cauſing them even to ſinke and die within us: how ghaſtly did men and women look? how diſtractedly did they run about! how did their haire even ſtand an end! how little did they know what they ſaid or did, whilſt with ſafety enough to their perſons they did at a ſufficient diſtance gaze at the Fire, conſuming their own and other mens houſes! had they themſelves been in their houſes at the ſame time, as at other times, they might have been, burnt in their Beds, ſome faſt aſleep, others but newly awake) the fire might poſſibly have had only dead Carcaſſes to conſume, as having been firſt killed by the greatneſs of their feares. Read *Heb.* 12. 21. where it is ſaid, *ſo terrible was the ſight of Mount Sinai, that burned, verſ.* 18, *that Moſes ſaid; I exceedingly fear and quake,* (even that *Moſes*, that did not fear the wrath of *Pharaoh*, could not without trembling ſtand and behold Mount *Sinai* all on fire. And yet what is it to ſee the moſt dreadful Fires, in compariſon of what it is to feel or live amidſt the ſmalleſt flames? To lie or think of lying one hour in a fiery Oven, were much more terrible, than to have ſtood at a diſtance and beheld *Sodom* or any other City all in flames. Wonder not then that ſinners in *Zion* are afraid, whilſt they ſay; who among us ſhall dwell with the devouring fire? who amongſt us ſhall dwell with everlaſting burnings? No execution ſo terrible to men as that which is performed by fire, and therefore that is reſerved for the greateſt of malefactors, as

Wizards,

wizards, witches, and such like; unless when bloody Papists have had the dispensing of it and then it was the portion of the choicest Christians, Saints and Martyrs. They forsooth will provide fiery Chariots for Gods *Elijahs* to ascend up to heaven in. But we know that kind of punishment is due only to the worst of men, because the greatest of earthly punishments, and the most like to hell. If Fire be not exceeding terrible, why did the generality of men flie before it as fast as they could, and leave all that was near it, to its mercy, or rather cruelty? yea it is commonly reported, that some of the strongest and most undaunted bruits, as Wolves and Bears and Lions, are kept in awe by Fire, and dare not approach it. So that Fire is as it were a wall of defence to Men against those salvage enemies. If the Lion roare, saith the Scripture, shall not all the beasts of the Forrest tremble? and yet himself trembles at the sight of Fire. In a word, if it be the professed opinion of Papists, (as I think it is) that all persons, and consequently themselves must abide, for some time more or less, in the Fire of Purgatory: I wonder that every person so believing, should not live in continual horrour, crying out as those sinners in *Zion*? *Isa.* 33.14. Who can dwell with devouring fire? were it but for the space of a few moneths or daies, much more for many years together? (and in a smaller time, few of them seem to expect a release from that place of torment; though they have advantages for that purpose above most other persons.) If it were possible for a man to lie but one day in fire unconsumed, and he did know and believe he should do so; would

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not the expectation thereof anticipate the comfort of his whole life? From that natural dread of fire that is in men, and every mans apprehensiveness of that kind of torment, being intolerable; I am led to think, that all Papists are either miserable, or hypocritical; miserable in believing an uncomfortable lie viz. the doctrine of Purgatory; or hypocritical, in not believing that which they profess to own, as a great and necessary truth. But enough as concerning the terribleness of our material Fire.

Of the terribleness of God.

Consider we now whether the great God be not also exceeding terrible in that respect, fitly stiled a consuming fire. *Deut.*7.2. *The Lord thy God is amongst you, a mighty God and terrible also.* *Deut.*10.17. and *Nehem.*1.5. *The great and terrible God, that keepeth Covenant.* And *Job* 37.22. *With God is terrible Majesty.* And *Psal.*65.5. *By terrible things in righteousness wilt thou answer us, O God, &c.* and *Psal.*66.3. *Say unto God how terrible art thou in thy works?* Psal.68.15. *O God thou art terrible out of thy holy places.* *Psal.*76.12. *He is terrible to the Kings of the earth.* *Jacob* had a great dread of God, when God spake no other than good and comfortable words to him: when he saw God standing above the ladder, which was shewed him in his dream, *Gen:*28.13. see *v.*16. and 17. *And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and said, Surely the Lord is in this place. And he was afraid and said, How dreadful is this place, This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of Heaven.* The gate of Heaven, and yet dreadful, as God was in that place. God at that time spake nothing but promises and encouragments,

yet

yet did *Jacob* tremble at his presence. Our God is fearful even in praises. If *Jacob* did but dream of God, he was filled with awe, and that not only whilst the dream lasted; but when he awoke, and knew he had but dreampt. If God be so terrible when he is pleased, what is he when he is angry? *Psal.* 76.7. Who may stand in thy sight when once thou art angry? God was friends with *Moses* when he told him, *Gen.* 33.20. *Thou canst not see my face, for no man can see me, and live.* And *v.* 22. whilst my glory passeth by, *I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand whilst I pass by.* *v.* 23. *And thou shalt see my back parts, but my face shall not be seen.* Much of the terribleness of God is insinuated in that strange passage, *Exod.* 33.3. *I will send an Angel before thee; for I will not go up in the midst of thee, lest I consume thee.* Here we read of God wishing the Israelites to let him go from amongst them, because his terrour was such; but elsewhere concerning the men of *Bethshemesh* sending God from amongst them (like those *Gadarens* that besought Christ to depart their coast) 1 *Sam.* 6.20. *Who is able* (say they) *to stand before this holy Lord God, and to whom shall he go up from us?* *v.* 21. *And they sent to the inhabitants of Kirjath-jearim, saying, Come ye and fetch the Ark of the Lord up to you.* Namely, because God had slain fifty thousand three score and ten of the Bethshemites for looking into the Ark. Much like to this were the words of *Peter* to Christ, *Luke* 5. 8. *Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.* Let the Prophet *Isaiah* tell you how awful the presence of God is, whom you finde thus crying out, *Wo is me for I am*

undone

undone, for I am a man of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts. How full is the 18. Psalm of expressions setting forth the awful Majesty of Gods presence, from v. 7. *Then the earth shook and trembled, the foundations of the hills moved and were shaken, because he was wroth.* But to quote all that might be quoted to that purpose, were to transcribe a great part of the Bible.

Of the Anger of God represented by Fire.

Therefore O my soul, pass on and think of something else, in which the parallel holds betwixt such Fire, as that whereby our famous City was lately burnt to ashes, and God himself, who is stiled a consuming Fire. Once again, As the power and awfull presence of God are livelily represented to us by this material Fire: so also is his anger, and that both as to the essence and nature of it; as also to several attributes (if I may so call them) of that attribute of God, *viz.* his wrath. As namely, the impartialness of it, like fire, that spareth neither one thing nor another: as also the fierceness of it, and its consuming destroying nature, to which might be added the intollerableness of it, &c. First we know it is the nature and property of Fire to act as if it were in a great passion, and yet it never is in any, nor is it capable of any. Thus saith God of himself, *Isa.* 27. 4. *Fury is not in me*; that is, I am in no passion (neither can he be) yet adds, *who will set the briars and thorns against me in battle? I would go through them, I would burn them together.* Such things as are the usual effects of anger are frequently done by God, but such an affection as wrath in Man is, can no wayes consist with

those

those perfections which are in God, no more than with the nature of fire upon other accounts.

I must not forget that I was even now speaking of the impartiality of Fire, as one property of that Element by which it resembleth God. Fire is no respecter of persons or things: so their nature be but combustible, it spares neither one nor the other. May I not allude to those words 1 *Cor.* 3. 12. *If any Man build upon this foundation Gold, Silver, precious Stones, Wood, Hay, Stubble.* Here are variety of superstructures mentioned; but the Fire buries all in one common heape; layes the gold and precious stones amongst the rubbish, as well as the wood, hay, and stubble. It mingles Flint stones and Diamonds: Pibbles and Jewels in one and the same Grave. As is said of Death. *Eque pulsat pauperum Tabernas, Regumque turres*; the like may be said of fire. It as soon takes hold on the Pallaces of Princes, as on the Cottages of Peasants. And is there not the like impartiality in the great God? His anger knowes no difference betwixt small and great, high and low. *Psal.* 76. 12. *He cutteth off the Spirits of Princes: he is terrible to the Kings of the Earth.* Did he not sink rebellious *Pharaoh*, as low in the red Sea, as any of his common Souldiers? did he not give his carkass in common with theirs, to be meat to the fishes of that Sea? See *Isa.* 9. 14 15. *The Lord will cut off from Israel head and taile*: The ancient and honourable, he is the head, &c. *Isa.* 10. 12. *I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the King of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks*: *vers.* 26. *And the Lord of Hosts shall stir up a scourge for him, according to the slaughter of Midian at the Rock of Oreb*: *Judg.* 7. 25.

7. 25. and the Psalmist speaking of *Sisera* and *Jabin*: the latter of which was the King of *Canaan*, and had 9000 Chariots of Iron. *Judg.* 4. 3. (and *Sisera* was his General) saith of them, that they perished at *Endor*, and that they became as dung for the Earth. *Psal.* 83. 10. See what God did to *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Dan.* 5. 21. *He was driven from Men, and his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling was with the wilde Asses: they fed him with Grass like Oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of Heaven, till he knew that the most high God ruleth in the Kingdome of Men, and that he appointeth over it whomsoever he will.* Must *Jehoiakim* needs be buried in state, because he was the Son of *Josiah* King of *Judah*, and did succeed him in the Throne? No, saith God, *Jer.* 22. 19. *He shall be buried with the burial of an Asse, drawn and cast forth beyond the Gates of Jerusalem.* Thus the anger of the great God (like fire) puts no difference betwixt them that sit on Thrones, and those that go from door to door. Hence that in *Psal.* 2. 10. *Be wise oh ye Princes, &c. Serve the Lord with fear, &c.*

I observe another property in fire, and that is great fiercenes and eagernes: so that for that matter there is no other creature comparable to it. A shee Bear robbed of her Whelps. A Bull in a Net, full of the fury of the Lord, is not half so fierce as fire. I would see either of them two in an angry humour gnaw great beames of Iron in sunder, and make them crumble to dust: or let them but make some massy Oak beams presently fly in two, in token of their rage; but if they can do neither, fire exceedeth them in strength and fiercenes; but yet not so much as its

its self is exceeded by the fierceneſs of the wrath of God; for whoſe wrath the Scripture hath no Epithite more common, than that of fierce, *Num.* 25. 4, 32, 14. and *Pſal.* 88. 16. *Thy fierce wrath goeth over me*: and in the abſtract, *Pſal.* 78. 49. *He caſt upon them the fierceneſs of his anger*: and *Nahum.* 1. 6. *Who can abide the fierceneſs of his anger?* The power and fierceneſs of fire may be conceived of, and we may fear as much or more hurt than the fire can have opportunity to dous; yea this time, many of us did fear it would have done more hurt: but the wrath of God is beyond all that our minds can comprehend. *Pſal.* 90. 11. *Who knoweth the power of thine anger? even according to thy fear, ſo is thy wrath*: The wrath of God is a vaſt Ocean, (as I may call it) his judgments are a great depth, and fire is but one ſtream of that Ocean: and therefore fire can be nothing like ſo fierce as is the wrath of God. Sword and Peſtilence are two other ſtreames of the wrath of God, and there are many more, by which you may judge how fierce the main Ocean is, every arm and rivulet whereof runs with ſuch a mighty torrent. In how many channels of diſtinct puniſhments did the wrath of God break out upon *Pharaoh*, and his people? and yet towards them he did not ſtir up all his wrath neither.

But the next property of the wrath of God, *viz.* its conſuming devouring nature (which fire may repreſent to us as much as any earthly thing) will plainly prove, that divine anger is exceeding fierce. Which of all the creatures God hath made is ſo able to deſtroy, ſo profound to make ſlaughter as fire is? And is it not in that reſpect

an Embleme of the wrath of God? What manner of expreſſions are thoſe, *Deutr.* 32. 22. *A fire is kindled in mine anger, and ſhall burn unto the loweſt Hell, and ſhall conſume the Earth with her increaſe, and ſet on fire the foundations of the Mountains*: alſo *Pſal.* 90. 5. *They are like the graſs which groweth up. In the morning it flouriſheth, in the evening it is cut down, and withered. For we are conſumed by thine anger.* Alſo *Pſal.* 46. 8. *Come behold the works of the Lord, what Deſolations he hath made in the Earth.* How doth the wrath of God conſume perſons, not only as to their eſtates, but as to their inward comforts, which are far more precious: *Pſal.* 39. 11. *When thou with rebukes doeſt correct man for iniquity, thou makeſt his beauty to conſume away like a moth.* Yea how the wrath of God conſumes Families. *Job* 31. 12. *It is a fire that conſumeth to deſtruction, and would root out all mine increaſe*; Meaning that the wrath and curſe of God, which the ſin he there purgeth himſelf from, *viz.* Adultery, would procure that which would do ſo, that might root out all his increaſe both as to eſtate and off-ſpring, &c. might quite conſume his Family. Of Gods wrath conſuming Towns and Cities, we have many ſad inſtances, as namely in *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, in *Jeruſalem*, Sometimes the glory of the whole Earth. And a much more modern and ſad inſtance as to our ſelves in *London* its ſelf (with teares be it ſpoken) which none of us ever thought to have ſurvived. Yea whole Kingdomes have been conſumed by the wrath of God, and turned upſide down: witneſs the *Chaldean*, *Perſian*, and *Grecian* Monarchies, with ſeveral others, but when was it ever heard that a whole Kingdome was de-

deſtroyed by Fire? Theſe things conſidered, the conſumptions and deſolations which are made by Fire may juſtly put us in mind of thoſe greater deſolations which the wrath of God is able to make on perſons, families, and Kingdoms.

Of the intolerable pain that Fire can put men to.

There is one thing more in Fire, and that is the intolerableneſs of that pain and miſery which it is able to put us to, in reference to which I would yet further parallel it with the wrath of God. I know no pain ſo exquiſite as that which proceeds from Fire. I know no perſon alive ſo patient, as that he is able to bear it, if he be grievouſly burnt or ſcalded, till ſuch time as the fire be taken out; that is to ſay, bear it without doleful moans and outcries.

Of the greater intolerableneſs of the wrath of God.

I think there is no man whoſe heart would ſerve him to think of lying in a fiery furnace, ſuch as the three children were caſt into. Yet is not Fire its ſelf, got within us, or about us, ſo intolerable as the wrath of God. It goes by the name of *Fiery indignation*, *Heb.* 10 27. not as if it were no worſe than fire, but as fire being the moſt tormenting creature, we know can beſt expreſs it. It is the ſenſe of divine wrath that wounds the ſpirits of men, and therefore it is ſaid, *A wounded ſpirit who can bear?* that is, none can bear. *Prov.* 18. 14. I read *Heman* ſaying, *Pſ.* 88. 4. *I am ready to die from my youth up, whilſt I ſuffer thy terrors, I am diſtracted.* And *v.* 16. *Thy terrors have cut me off.* And *David*, *Pſal.* 38. *There is no reſt in my bones becauſe of my ſins.* And *v.* 8. *I have roared by reaſon of the diſquietneſs*

of my heart, as being under a ſenſe of Gods wrath. *v.* 1. *Rebuke me not in thy wrath.* Whoſoever ſaid any thing may be borne but the wrath of God, doubtleſs meant very well; but he had ſpoken better, and paſt all exception, if he had ſaid, Any thing may be borne better than the wrath of God. There is no viall that ſcalds like to that. If *Francis Spira* whilſt deſpairing in his bed, had been burning at a ſtake inſtead thereof, I queſtion whether that material fire would have put him to ſo much miſery as did the anguiſh of his mind, overwhelmed with the apprehenſions of divine wrath, and of his future dwelling with everlaſting burnings. If hell its ſelf be a fire kindled by the breath of Gods wrath, as it is ſaid of *Tophet*, *that the breath of the Lord like a mighty ſtream of Brimſtone kindleth it.* Surely the wrath of God is much more intolerable than any viſible, or culinary fire whatſoever.

I ſee then the Spirit of God, according to his manner, hath couched much ſenſe in a few words, when he tells us that our God is a conſuming fire. There being ſuch a likeneſs as is betwixt the Creator of all things and this creature; I deſire as oft as I behold fire, to think of God, whilſt I admire the ſcarcely reſiſtible power of Fire, let me ever adore the utterly irreſiſtible power of him that made and governs it. Whilſt it amuſeth me to think what work and havock Fire can make in a few daies or hours. Be amazed, O my ſoul, to conſider what greater deſolations God can make in the twinkling of an eye, and with a word of his mouth. If he will but ſpeak concerning a Nation, to

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pluck it up, or pull it down, it will be done presently. *Jer.* 18. with him it is but a word and a fatal blow. Methinks it doth not only help my meditation of, but facilitate my belief concerning the greatneſs of the power of God; Impartialneſs of his revenging Juſtice: Severity and Fierceneſs of his anger: Intolerableneſs of his diſpleaſure: when I ſee ſo much of ſuch things as theſe in one of his creatures, which in our houſes we prefer to no better place than our chimneys, and are unwilling even there to place it, or ſuffer it to aſcend too high. May I think of Fire more frequently and ſolemnly than otherwiſe I ſhould, for thoſe reſemblances of God which are to be found in it. I confeſs, to think of God by the name of Love, as he is called, 1 *John* 4.8. & 16. is more pleaſing, and may better ſuit us under great dejections, but to meditate of God as a conſuming fire, may profit us more, when our hearts (which is too uſual) want that due awe of God which ſhould preſerve them from ſinning wilfully againſt him. If God be Fire to ſinners, let us not dare to be as Tinder, or as Gun-powder to Sin and Temptation. If we come not neer a diſmal Fire but with trembling hearts, let us not approach God but with holy reverence, and let us learn to tremble at his word, which alſo is compared to fire. Yet leſt I dwell too long upon this one ſubject to the prejudice of others, I will content my ſelf with the addition of a few plain Corollaries, ſo eaſie to be drawn from Gods being a conſuming Fire (in the ſenſe given of it) that he which runs may read them. If God be Fire, woe to them that are briars and thorns.

*Isa.*27. he will consume them. If God be Fire, it concerns us to prove our selves and our work, for the Fire shall make all things manifest, 1 *Cor.* 3.12. If we lay chaff and stubble, though upon a good foundation, our work will be burnt up, and our selves saved, but so as by Fire, that is, with great difficulty, and much ado. What impunity can great ones promise themselves, if God be as impartial towards all sorts of sinners, as Fire is towards all combustible things? If the wrath of God be more intollerable than Fire, who would not fear to offend him? If the power of God be more irresistible than Fire it self, who would set himself against him? or who can do it and prosper? yea, who would not labour to have God on his side? For who can be against us (that is to any purpose) if God be for us. Is God so able to destroy, let me be none of his enemies. Is he Fire, then O that I might be Gold, for if so, though he may purge me, yet he will not consume me. In a word, is God a consuming Fire, then knowing the terror of the Lord, *Let us consider what manner of persons we ought to be in all holy conversation and godlyness.*

Meditations

Meditations and Diſcourſes of the Reaſons that are found in Scripture, of Gods bringing the Judgment of Fire upon a perſon or people.

MEDITATION I.

Of the ſins for which God ſent Fire upon Sodom and Gomorrah.

THe firſt pernicious Fire of which we read in Scripture, was that which fell upon *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, *Gen.* 19. 24. The general cauſe of it, was that which was told *Abraham*, *Gen.* 18.20. *And the Lord ſaid, becauſe the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and becauſe their ſin is very grievous,* But their particular crimes are ſet down, *Ezek.* 16.49. where God upbraiding *Jeruſalem*, ſaith, *Behold this was the iniquity of thy ſiſter Sodom, pride, fulneſs of bread, and abundance of idleneſs was in her, and in her daughters, neither did ſhe ſtrengthen the hand of the poor and needy. v.50. And they were haughty, and committed abomination before me, therefore I took them away as I ſaw good.* Now what that abomination was which they committed, I think St. *Jude* tells us moſt plainly, *Jude* 7. *Even as Sodom and Gomorrah and the Cities about them, giving themſelves over to Fornication, and going after ſtrange fleſh, are ſet forth for an example, ſuffering the vengeance of eternal fire.* Now the three firſt crimes charged upon them, *viz.* Pride, Idleneſs, and Fulneſs of bread, did

did make way for the last, *viz.* their being given up to Fornication. Pride prepares for uncleanness; as it disposeth persons to those habits and gestures which tempt others to tempt them to wantonness; witness the great pride which some take in going extreamly naked, whence it often happens to them as to *Hezekiah* after that he had shown the King of *Babylon* messengers more of his treasure than was fit for them to see. *Isa.* 39. it was not long after that the Babylonians came and took away all he had from his children, and carried both them and theirs into captivity. One meeting a boy with a basket of chickens wide open, askt him how he would sell them, who answering him they were not to be sold, he replied to the boy again, Then fool shut thy Basket. But that by the way.

It comes to pass by the judgment of God, that proud persons often prove unclean, because uncleanness is a disgraceful sin, and so the more fit for proud persons to be left unto, in order to making them more humble. For of him that committeth Adultery *Salomon* saith, *Prov.* 6. 33. *A wound and a dishonour shall he get, and his reproach shall not be wiped away.* Persons by that sin are said to *dishonour their own bodies. Rom.* 1. 24. Also that very complexion which is most famed for proud, is generally observed as most prone to uncleanness, and 'tis too commonly seen that a fantastical (which is a proud) habit, and a filthy heart go together; and those places are generally most notorious for lust, that are most infamous for pride; as if those two weeds delighted to grow in the same soil; proud spirits and proud flesh go usually hand in hand. And

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as for Fulneſs of bread, by which we are to underſtand Gluttony and Luxuriouſneſs in the uſe of meats, that is as great a hand-maid to Luſt as Pride can be. *Jer.5.7. When I fed them to the full, then they committed adultery, and aſſembled themſelves by troops in the harlots houſes.* v.8. *They were as fed horſes in the morning, every one neighed after his neighbours wife.* (He adds v. 9. *Shall I not viſit for theſe things, ſaith the Lord; and ſhall not my ſoul be avenged of ſuch a Nation as this?*) *Sine Cerere & Baccho friget venus.* But where *Ceres* and *Bacchus*, that is, meats and drinks are uſed immoderately, Luſt becomes outragious: and then if abundance of Idleneſs be ſuperadded as a third pair of Bellows to blow the Fire, it cannot but flame out exceſſively. For much Idleneſs is that which imps *Cupids* wings as much as any thing, and is the very feathers that make his darts to flie. The Poet knew that full well, who ſaid, *Otia ſi tollas periere cupidinis arcus.* No weed grows more generally in great plenty in the ſoil of mens hearts, than luſt doth, in caſe they ſuffer them to lie fallow, and unmanured, in caſe they be not ploughed up by honeſt labour and ſowed with the ſeeds of better things. Now theſe I have mentioned were but the underling ſins of *Sodom*, which had their eies upon another ſin (as the eyes of a hand-maid are towards her miſtris.) The miſtris whom they all ſerved and did homage to, that was the luſt of the fleſh, in which they received their conſummation, and as St. *James* ſaith, *Luſt when it hath conceived bringeth forth ſin, and ſin when it is finiſhed bringeth forth death.* So Pride, Idleneſs, and fulneſs of bread, when they have conceived, bring forth

forth luſt. We may not omit one ſin more which is charged upon *Sodom*, and did help to burn it; and it is ſet forth in theſe words, *Neither did ſhe ſtrengthen the hands of the poor and needy*. She was too proud to look upon the poor; ſhe had fulneſs of bread, but ſupplied not the neceſſities of others, out of her own ſuperfluities; ſhe was idle her ſelf, but did not ſet the poor to work, or not reward them for it, as thoſe mentioned, *Jam.* 5.3,4. *The ruſt of your gold ſhall eat your fleſh as it were fire. Behold the hire of the labourers which is kept back by you, crieth, &c.*

Now let us conſider how proper and ſuitable it is for ſuch offences as theſe to be puniſhed with Fire. No creature levels things, or brings them into the duſt ſooner, or more than Fire. Therefore it is a fit puniſhment for pride, which muſt take a fall. Idle perſons are drones, and drones muſt be driven from their hives (*Ignavum fucos pecus a præſepibus arcent*;) & what can do it ſo eaſily as fire? And as for thoſe that are given to luxury, or fulneſs of bread, no ſuch compendious way to puniſh them, as by ſetting that cormorant Fire, to eat them out of houſe and home. Then as for uncleanneſs, it is no wonder if that conſume Towns and Cities, being a Fire it ſelf, ſo called *Job* 31.12. *It is a fire that conſumeth to deſtruction, &c.* Who can carry Fire in his boſome, and not be burnt? We ſee that ordinarily burns the bodies of men (as to part) and they expreſs their mallady, by telling us they have got a Burn, or are Burnt. Sometimes it coſts them their noſes, as if that organ of ſmelling had rather quit the body, than endure that ſtench which the rottenneſs thereof annoies it with. They that

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escape so, (though that be sufficiently ill-favoured, and no honourable scar) come off better than many of them do, who mourn at last, when their flesh and their bodies are consumed, *Prov.* 5. 11. implying, that some do lose not only their noses (which are as it were the spout of their bodies) in that cursed service, but as it were the main fabrick, this Fire burning down to the ground. But why should unmercifulness be punished with Fire? Let St. *James* tell you the reason of that, *Jam.* 2. 13. *For he shall have judgment without mercy, who hath shewed no mercy.* No executioner of wrath more fit to dispense judgment without mercy than fire is, and that is the portion of them that shew no mercy.

And now poor *London*, how loath am I to trample upon thy dust: or to speak so harsh a word to thee in thy misery, as to say, that in the forementioned respects thou mightest have shaken hands with *Sodom*, and called her sister, as God was pleased to speak to *Jerusalem*, concerning her sister *Sodom*. Yet because being deeply humbled under Gods hand, is the way to be lifted up; in order thereunto give me leave to say that even in thee, O *London*, (though not in thee only, nor in thee chiefly) were found Pride, Fulness of Bread, and abundance of Idleness; neither did many of you strengthen the hands of the poor and needy, as you might, and ought to have done. Nor canst thou purge thy self from the guilt of much uncleanness, which was in the midst of thee (that abomination as it is called in the sight of God. *Ezek.* 16. 50.) Was it to be seen by the garb of *London*, and the gallantry of Citizens living, and by that breadth and

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port they did bear, that God had been taking them down several years together, plucking off their plumes by a devouring Pestilence, consuming war, huge dearth of trade, that God had been calling to them, to *put off their ornaments, that he might know what to do with them?* I say was this to be discerned by the equipage in which men lived? were not the expences of many far above the proportion of their estates (when yet they needed not to have been so) and their spirits yet higher than their expences? what may we call this but Pride? And as for fulness of bread, I wish that Epicurizing had not been too much in fashion, that *there had not been slaying of Oxen, and killing of Sheep, eating Flesh, and drinking Wine, when God called for weeping, and mourning*, as it is, *Isa.* 22.12. For it is added, *Surely this iniquity shall not be purged away till ye die.* And whereas abundance of fulness is further charged upon *Sodom*, it were well if those expressions used *Deut.* 28.56. where we read of the *tender and delicate woman, which would not adventure to set the sole of her foot upon the ground, for delicateness and tenderness*, were not applicable to too many of that sex; and that others like the Athenians, had not spent most of their time in hearing and telling some new thing. An idler people could not be, than many were in that great City, whereof themselves would have been sensible, if they had but seen the pains and industry which is used by many or most people dwelling in Villages, and Country-places, that are alwaies in action, as the Poet saith of the Husbandman, *Redit labor actus in orbem.* And as for matter of uncleanness, why

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was it that very Apprentices were ready to pull down houſes upon that account (though having no commiſſion either from God or man; they did not well to attempt it) if Stews and Brothel-houſes had not been too notorious? As for not ſtrengthning the hand of the poor and needy, that is by a due relief, how could they otherwiſe chooſe than be guilty of it, who weakned their eſtates by idleneſs, laviſhed them upon their pride, exhauſted them by their luxury, ſpent them upon their uncleanneſs, which as ſo many Cormorants devoured that which might and ought to have been given to the poor: I ſee then there are moral cauſes of evil as well as natural, and theſe are ſome of them. He is bruitiſh that thinks otherwiſe. Do not the ends and intereſts of men ſway the World, next to God himſelf, and what are they but moral cauſes: and if ſuch be to be taken notice of, why not ſin, which is more conſiderable than all the reſt?

Then O yee late Inhabitants of that famous City, which is now in aſhes, as ever you deſire it ſhould flouriſh again, repent of your pride, fulneſs of bread, abundance of idleneſs, neglect of the poor, and abominable uncleanneſs, ſo many of you as were guilty of all, or any of theſe (for all were not;) and let others mourne over them that have ſinned, and have not repented, that God may repent of the evil which he hath brought upon you, and may build up your waſte places in his good time. Continue not in the ſins of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, leſt their puniſhment be either not removed from you, or if ſo, again revived upon you.

MEDI-

MEDITATION II.

Of destroying Fire, procured by offering strange fire.

WE read concerning *Nadab* and *Abihu*, *that there went out fire from the Lord and devoured them, and they died before the Lord? Lev.* 10. 2. Why that heavy judgment befell those two Sons of *Aaron* (the Saints of the Lord) the preceding verse will tell us, *viz.* because they took their censers, put incense therein, and offered strange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not. Their fault was this, God had sent down fire from heaven upon his Altar, *Levit. 9. 24.* It should seem it was the pleasure of God (and doubtless they knew it) that his sacrifice (which one calls his meat, as the Altar his Table) should be kindled and prepared with that fire only, which by continual adding of fuel, (as need required) was to be kept from ever going out, (as is supposed) *Levit. 16. 10.* There 'tis said, *Aaron shall take a censer full of Coales of fire from off the Altar, and his hands full of incense, and bring it within the vaile.* Now they presumed to offer incense to God with common fire, which came not from the Altar, before the Lord, and for this they were burnt to death. Upon this passage Bishop *Hall* (worthily called our *English* Seneca) reflects thus. It is a dangerous thing, saith he, in the service of God to decline from his own institutions; we have to do with a power, which is wise to prescribe his own worship, just to require what he hath prescribed, powerful to revenge that which he hath not required.

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MEDITATION III.

Of fire enkindled by murmuring.

IN *Numb.* 11. the *first* and *third* verſes, I read theſe words, *When the people complained, it diſpleaſed the Lord, and the Lord heard it and his anger was kindled, and the fire of the Lord burnt amongſt them, and conſumed them that were in the utmoſt parts of the Camp: And he called the name of the place Taberah, becauſe the fire of the Lord burnt among them.* It doth not much concern our preſent purpoſe to enquire what the cauſe of this their murmuring was, which yet is thought to have been want of meat in the Wildernels, and thence the place where they were puniſhed, to have been called the graves of luſt, as our Margents do Engliſh, (kiberoth hattaavah) neither need we be infallibly reſolved what kind of fire it was that God ſent amongſt them for their murmuring) it is all we need obſerve at the preſent, that they were puniſhed by fire, and that murmuring was the ſin they were puniſhed for. Our puniſhment I am ſure hath been by fire as well as theirs; ought we not then to examine whether our provocation was not much-what by murmuring, even as theirs was? were we contented when the City was ſtanding? yea did we not grumble and repine at one thing or other every day? and yet we think we ſhould be more than contented, that is to ſay, very thankfull and joyfull, if we had but *London* again, if that great City Phenix-like might but riſe out of the aſhes, and our places know us once more. *It* ſhould

seem then, we had enough then to be contented with, and thankfull for, but we knew it not, as it is said of husbandmen, *Felices nimium sua si bona norant.* If some were in worse condition than formerly, would that justify their murmuring? were not the *Israelites* in the Wilderness when they were punished for murmuring? and had they not enjoyed a better condition than that in former times? Do we murmurers think that men are to blame? and was not *Shimei* to blame when he cursed *David*? and yet *David* looking higher, *viz.* unto God, submissively replied, it may be the Lord hath bid him curse me. The Robbers and spoilers of *Israel* were in fault. Yet seeing it was God that gave *Jacob* to the spoile, and *Israel* to the robbers, that was reason enough why they should be dumb as a sheep before the Shearer, and not open their mouths in any way of murmuring. If we so remember our miseries, as to forget our mercies, if we aggravate our evil things, and extenuate our good, if we be so vexed and displeased with men, as if they were sole authors of all our troubles, and as if God (who owes and payes us such chastisements) had no hand in them. If in our hearts we quarrel with God, as if he were a hard master, and had done us wrong, if when we had food and raiment we were not content; if when we had something, and that considerable (and how could our loss have been considerable, if our enjoyment had not been so?) we were as unsatisfied, as if we had just nothing. If so, do not these things plainly prove that we were murmurers many of us? and whose expetience doth not tell him that these things were so? how many

ny things have we repined at, that men could not help? as namely the peſtilence; now in ſuch caſes it is evident, that we have not murmured againſt men, but againſt the Lord, *Exod.* 16. 8. Nay, if men be puniſhed far leſs than their ſins deſerve, and yet will not accept of that their puniſhment, but fret at him that inflicted it, what muſt we call that but murmuring? And was not that our caſe? I had almoſt ſaid, that *England* even before this fire, was ſo full of diſcontent, (whatſoever the cauſe were) as if all the plagues of *Egypt* had been upon it, and how after this it can ſwell more without burſting, is hard to conceive. So little had we learn'd good *Eli*'s note, *It is the Lord, let him do what ſeemeth good to him.*

Now if the Law of retaliation be, burning for burning, as we read it was, *Exod.* 21. 25. How juſt was it with the great God to ſend a Fire upon us, for our grievous diſcontents and murmurings? Murmurers are full of heart-burnings againſt God himſelf, diſcontent is a Fire within, that flies and flames up againſt the great God, as *Ahaz* ſaid: (who with his tongue did ſpeak but the language of the hearts of many others.) This evill is of the Lord, why ſhould I wait on him any longer? wonder not then if the anger of God have burnt againſt thoſe that did burn againſt him, if he hath given us fire for fire. We were alwayes murmuring when we had no ſuch cauſe as now we have, and now God hath given us, as it were ſomething to murmur for, and yet let me recall my ſelf, that was ſpoken but vulgarly: For though God ſhould puniſh us with Scorpions inſtead of Rods, he will no t allow

us to murmur, but commands us to silence our selves with such a question and answer as this. Why doth the living man complain? man for the punishment of his sin. Who so considers how unthankfull we were for what we had before the fire, will see no cause to wonder at what we have lost, but rather to wonder at this, that such as have lost but a part, did not lose all. For with Parents nothing is more common than to take away those things from their Children quite and clean, for which they will not so much as give them thanks, as not being satisfied with them. Then say Parents, give them us again, you shal have none of them, they shal be given to them that will be thankfull for them, yea say they not sometimes in their anger, we will throw such a thing in the fire, before such unthankful Children shall have it. I see *London* full of open Cellars and Vaults, as it were so many open Graves, and Earth lying by, ready to cover them. How unwilling am I to say that Kiberoth Hattaavah might justly be written upon them, that is, the graves of those that lusted after more, and by that meanes lost what they had? If I were one of the murmurers, (as there were few exempted from that guilt) O Lord, I have cause to own thy justice in whatsoever this Fire hath or shall contribute to my loss and prejudice, and also to adore thy mercy, if my share in this loss were not proportionably so great, as that of many others, and those my betters.

MEDITATION IV.

Of Rebellion againſt Moſes and Aaron, procuring a deſtructive Fire, Numb. 16.

THe *ſixteenth* Chapter of the Book called *Numbers*, in the 35 verſe thereof, tells us, how that *a Fire came down from the Lord, and conſumed no leſs then* 250 *Men that offered Incenſe*, not their Houſes, but their very Perſons. Some would hardly think that ſo ſmall a crime (as oppoſition to Magiſtracy and Miniſtry are in their account) ſhould have been the only cauſes of ſo heavy a judgment. And yet we finde that alledged as the main, if not the only reaſon of *Corah* and his Complices being conſumed by fire. The Confederates of *Korah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram* are ſaid to have been 250 Princes of the Aſſembly, famous in the Congregation, men of renown. Yet when ſuch as they (who one would think might better afford to do ſuch a thing than meaner men) gathered themſelves together againſt *Moſes*, and againſt *Aaron*, ſaying why lift ye up your ſelves above the Congregation of the Lord? and they themſelves would be Prieſts and Princes, as well as they, *verſe* 10. Seek ye the Prieſthood alſo? ſaid *Moſes* to them (ye Sons of *Levi*.) And in the 13 *verſe*, they quarrel with *Moſes*, for making himſelf (which was falſe, for it was God that had made him ſo) altogether a Prince over them, as who ſhall ſay, they would have no body above themſelves, either in Church or State. I ſay, when they ſhewed this kinde of ſpirit and principle, you ſee

how God punished it. These were right Levellers, if I mistake not; they pretend they would have all to be alike, *vers.* 3. ye take too much upon you, all the Congregation are holy, every one of them; wherefore then, say they to *Moses* and *Aaron*, lift ye up your selves above others? But to pretend they would have none inferiour to them, surely was but a stratagem to bring to pass that they might have no Superiors, or rather that themselves might be superiour to all others. This was like to come to good, they would have neither head nor taile in Church or State, or else it should be all head, or all taile. But from these principles of Anarchy and Ataxy set at work (I say) from the displeasure of God against them upon that account) sprang the fire which we there read of.

Much of this spirit hath been in *England* within a few years past, when not a few gloried in the name of Levellers, at leastwise in the character and principles of men so called. If any of those embers be still raked up under ashes, I should fear least a Fire of tumult and confusion might break out from thence, and by their meanes as soon as any way: not do I question at all, but that the sin and guilt of such vile and antiscriptural tenets might help to kindle that fire which lately devoured the City. God will not suffer two such great Ordinances, as Magistracy and Ministry, which so greatly concern the good of the World, nor either of them to be trampled upon. St. *Jude* speaks sharply of such men, calling them filthy dreamers, who despise dominion: and speak evil of dignities: they who would level these, the God of order will level them, for such are

said

laid to perish in the gain-saying of *Korah*, *Jude* 11. Of such it is laid, in 2 *Pet.* 2. 12. That *as brute Beasts, they are made to be taken, and to be destroyed, and that they shall utterly perish in their own corruption.*

But then if we consider *Moses* and *Aaron*, one as a holy Magistrate, the other as a holy Minister, that did greatly aggravate the sin of *Korah*, and his Complices in rising up against, and seeking to depose them, for as such they had a double stamp of God upon them, *viz.* both as Magistrates, and as good. For as such, they were not only called Gods, but also partakers of the divine nature, and if we must be subject to Superiours, that are naught and froward, 1 *Pet.* 2. 18. much more to them that are good and gentle: the destruction of usefull Magistrates and Ministers is one of the greatest disservices that can be done to the World, and will as soon kindle the wrath of God, as almost any sin that men commit. 2 *Chron.* 36. 16. *But they mocked the messengers of God, and misused his Prophets, till the wrath of God arose against them, till there was no remedy.* *Mat.* 23. 36. There we finde these words, *O Jerusalem that killest the Prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, &c. Behold your house is left unto you desolate.* in *Numb.* 16. 11. *Moses* told *Corah* and his Company, that they were gathered together against the Lord. For what is done against Magistrates and Ministers, either as Officers ordained of God, or as good, in their places, is done against God himself, as the abuse offered to a Minister of State, is more against his Prince, than against himself. Those Rebels had some pretence for their insurrection, namely

that they were brought into a miserable condition, *vers.* 14. Thou hast not brought us into a Land that floweth with milk and honey, or given us fields or Vineyards, we will not come up: meaning that *Moses* had brought them into a Wilderness, and therefore they would not be subject to him. But we see that excuse would not serve their turns.

Neither the vices, nor the unhappiness of Rulers, and of their subjects under them (the latter of which was charged upon *Moses*, though very unjustly) can dispence with their obedience to them in lawful things. The *Israelites* were as truly bound to obey *Moses* in the Wilderness, as if he and they had dwelt and flourished together in the Land of *Canaan*. Had *Moses* been a bramble, as they represented him, from which they could receive neither fruit nor shelter, yet might he have said, as that bramble did in *Jothams* parable, *Judges* 9. 15. If in truth yee anoint me King over you (or if God had done it) then come and put your trust in my shadow: and if not, let fire come out of the bramble and devour the Cedars of *Lebanon*. No Childe can lawfully deny his Parents the observance of their lawful commands, because they are not so loving to him, or careful of him as they ought to be, neither have kept their own garments unspoted of the present World. Though *Noah* discovered nakedness, yet his Sons ought him reverence, and were some of them cursed for not paying what they did owe, They might do no more than turn their backs upon him, (that their eyes might not behold his shame) and yet themselves draw neer enough to cover it. May I

then

then live to see the day (or may my Children see it, if not I) in which all and every the inhabitants of these three Kingdomes shall perfectly detest those sinswhich brought fire(as it is called, whatsoever fire it was) upon *Korah*, *Dathan*, and those that were joyned with them; and that as we read, that not so much as a dog opened his mouth against the *Israelites* when they came out of *Egypt*; so neither may man, woman or childe, either speak a word, or dart a thought against those two great Ordinances of God, Magistracy and Ministry, (which some of late years have greatlie vilified) or against either of them; but may reverence that stamp of God which is put upon them, remembring that Ministers are called Angels in Scripture, and Magistrates are there called Gods. And whereas good Magistrates and good Ministers are in Gods account (and therefore in deed and in truth) more precious than the Gold of *Ophir*. May I live to see all and every of them so esteemed, and so dealt with; and may none of Gods *Elijahs* ever in any future age be tempted to imprecate fire from Heaven (as he of old did, 2 *King*. 1.10.) upon any Officers comming towards them in a hostile way, and with a bloody mind.

Nor may any man ever be so wicked and hardy, as to come towards any such in any such way, lest God who hath said, *Touch not mine anointed, and do my Prophets no harm*: should send that curse which was not causeless, and rain down fire upon them, as he did once and again upon those Captaines that came to seize upon *Elijah*; and once more, may I live to see that error perfectly rooted out of the minds of men

men, viz. that subjects may give a bill of divorce to their lawfull Soveraigns; or at leastwise to their own due Allegiance, if either they should prove vitious in their persons, or unhappy and unsuccessful in their publique Administrations, as those that told *Moses* he had not brought them into a Land flowing with Milk and Honey, and therefore they would not come up to him; whereas it is unquestionably our duty to come up to our Governours in whatsoever lawfully we may, whatsoever themselves or their ill successe be. Let it suffice, O Lord, that so many fires have been formerly kindled in the world, by mens following the way of *Korah*, and let the example of thy severity upon him and his complices, and on others that have trod in their steps, for ever deter men from kindling new fires upon the like accounts or (which is worse) provoking thee to kindle a fire upon them, as thou lately didst upon that once famous City of *London*, which now lieth in ashes.

MEDITATION V.

Of Sabbath-breaking mentioned in Scripture, as one great cause of Gods punishing a people by Fire.

TO them that shall carefully read what is spoken, *Jer.* 17. 28. nothing will more plainly appear than that God hath sometimes contended by Fire, for the pollution and profanation of his Sabbaths which he hath bid us remember

remember to keep holy. The words are these, *But if you will not hearken to me, to hallow the Sabbath day, and not to bear a burden even entring in the gates of Jerusalem on the Sabbath-day: then will I kindle a fire in the gates thereof, and it shall devour the Palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched.* To this sin amongst others did *Jerusalem* owe its destruction by Fire, which was afterwards accomplished. It is one of the complaints which the Prophet makes, *Lam. 2. 6. that God had caused their solemn Feasts and Sabbaths to be forgotten in Zion.* They would not keep them when they might, and afterwards (such was their distraction and confusion) they could hardly keep them if they would, and had so discontinued the observation of them, that they had almost forgotten that they had sometimes enjoyed such good daies, and still ought to observe them. It is said in *Lam. 1. 7. that the enemies saw her*, viz. *Jerusalem, and did mock at her Sabbaths*; which some expound, of their deriding the cessation of their wonted publick and solemn services, which the Temple being demolished they were forced to intermit.

I wish there lay no guilt upon *England*, and upon *London* itself, in reference to the profanation of Gods Sabbaths, and forgetting to keep them holy, as we are commanded to do; when *Saul* told *Samuel*, *that he had performed the commandment of the Lord*, 1 *Sam. 15. 14. Samuel* replied, *What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine eares, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?* Alluding to that, I may answer such as shall pretend the Sabbath was strictly kept; what then was the meaning of that noise of children

children and young folks, that we saw and heard playing up and down the streets on the Lords day? or what meant that vain and idle communication that we heard from the mouths of young and old, both men and women, as we passed along the streets on those daies? how came the Fields adjacent to the City, to be so crowded with company, walking to and fro, meerly for their pleasure on the Lords day; yea, why was it thus, not only before and after the time of publick worship, but in the very season of it? in so much that there was more company sometimes in the fields, on the Lords day, than in the Churches? was it for want of Churches to repair to? how could that be, when there were so many within the City it self, that now the Fire hath destroyed above fourscore, yet some remain? It could not be for want of room in Churches, for many were almost empty, and some of those, in which I doubt not, but the sincere milk of Gods Word might have been enjoyed. Why were Taverns and Ale-houses that stood in the fields, so frequented on the Lords daies, more than on working daies, as if they had been the Churches, and *Bacchus* the God that men ought to worship? yea, it is vehemently suspected, that Stewes and Baudy-houses were not without their customers on that day, as well as on any others. Oh the wanton carriages that mine eyes have seen on that day in the open fields. The greatest part of those I met, seemed to be on the merry pin, laughing & jesting, and disporting themselves one with another, both young men and maidens: By their behaviour one would have took it for some

jovial

jovial time, rather than for a day holy to the Lord, in which men are enjoyned, *not to think their own thoughts, speak their own words, or finde their own pleasures.* How few have I heard taking the name of God into their mouths on that day, otherwise than in vain, and by cursed oaths, as I have walked some miles an end. I verily think that many people had wont to spend the Lords day worse, generally, than any day in the whole week. Many did spend other daies in honest labour, who mis-spent the Lords day in dishonest recreations. So far were most from preparing for it before it came, that few kept it holy when it was come. Jews will not omit the preparations to their Sabbaths, but Christians did not only so, but pollute the Lords day its self. I might speak of such as did take the boldness to work on the Lords day, notwithstanding that they read to the contrary in *Neh.* 13. 15. *Jer.* 17. 21. and expresly in the fourth Commandement, in which it is said, *Exod.* 20. 10. *In it thou shalt not do any work, thou nor thy servant:* and yet did not some hard masters exact all their labours of their servants on those daies, when they had hast of work.

Have we not others set their wits on work to dispute against that day, and to write against it; witness many ill Treatises extant to that purpose. And why might they not as well have written against the other nine Commandements as against the fourth? Why must that only be thought Ceremonial, when all the rest are confessed to be Morral? If God have seemed to change it from the last to the first day of the week, can we take a just occasion from thence to

abrogate

abrogate it? I doubt not but the day we now keep by the name of the Lords day, was intended in the second Commandement as well as that which they under the Old Testament kept, which was called the Sabbath. A seventh day, or one day in every seven is provided for by that Commandment to be kept holy, but not always the seventh day from the creation. For it is not said, that God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, but that he blessed the Sabbath-day, or that day which himself had or should appoint to be kept as a Sabbath, or time of holy rest; which under the Old Testament was the last, but under the New is the first day of the week, called the Lords-day, for that Christ rose again as on that day. Although the first administration of the Lords Supper was in unleavenned bread, yet the institution of it is for the use of bread, not of that which is unleavenned. So, though God rested on the seventh day from the Creation, yet his legal Ordinance doth not precisely require the observation of that day, but of one day in seven. Who doubts but baptisme and the Lords Supper are now as much in force by vertue of the second Commandment, as Circumcision & the Passover were of old? that Commandment referring to such Ordinances as God should appoint, as well as to those which he had appointed, and so the fourth Commandement, to any day in seven that God should enjoyn, as well as to that which he had enjoyned. Why should not the practice of the Apostles be a sufficient warrant for changing of the day? 1 *Cor.* 16. 2. On the first day of the week let every of you lay by him in store

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as God hath prospered him. It appeareth that was their day of meeting for worship, because on that day they made their Collections for the poor; and in *Act.* 20. 7. it is said, *that on the first day of the week when the disciples met to break bread, Paul preached to them*; intimating, that was their day for partaking of the Lords Supper, and therefore in all likelihood for other religious services. Now, would the Apostles have ventured to change the day, without leave and command from God so to do?

But if any man be not convinced by these arguments, that the day ought to be so changed, yet let him shew me the least colour of reason for abrogating of the fourth Commandment, and observing no day in the week as a Sabbath to the Lord. Must men, if they must keep one day in the week holy, had as lieve it should be the first day of the week as the last. Most of those that quarrel at the observation of the first day, or Christian Sabbath, I fear do it because they would observe none at all; but as for those that conscientiously observe a seventh-day Sabbath, I dare not call them Jews, for Judaizing in that one thing, but think they may be better Christians than many that are more Orthodox as to the Time and Day. But as for those profane persons that have and do refuse to dedicate either the last or first day of the week to God, as a Sabbath or holy rest, I must be bold to tell them (if they be English-men) they had a great hand in setting *London* on fire, which was a vast loss to the whole Nation, and came doubtless for the sins of the whole Nation, as well as for the sins of its inhabitants. I say,

you

you had a great hand in it, and particularly by your prophanation of the Lords day, as the Text I quoted from *Jer.* 17. 21. leads me to think. I had almost said, that was become a National sin, as by the general practice of it, so for want of due endeavours to restrain it, such as *Nehemiah* used, (*Nehem.* 13. 16.) and therefore no wonder if God have punished with that which was, is, and will be a sore stroke upon the body of the Nation.

But besides the gross prophanation of the Lords day, whereof wicked men were guilty, *viz.* by working, playing, and doing more wickedness then than at other times. I fear few of the better sort can wash their hands in innocency, as from finding their own pleasure, and speaking their own words on Gods holy day, which is forbidden, *Isa.* 58. 13. or have called the Sabbath their delight, holy, and honourable of the Lord, as became us. Or with *John* have been in the Spirit so as we ought, on the Lords day. Few of us have kept any one Sabbath, as a Sabbath should be kept. Under pretence that we fear to act like Jews; it is well if we forget not to act like Christians, as to the Lords day. We took Gods day from him, and now he hath taken our City from us; we robd him of the best day in the week, for all daies are his, but this more especially, & he hath deprived us of the best City in the three Kingdoms. We committed Sacriledge in robbing God of his daies, which he had set apart for himself, and it prospered with us no better than that Coale did which the Eagle stole from the Altar, and therewith fired her own Nest. And now poor *London*, (if I may still call

thee

thee *London*) thou enjoyeſt thy Sabbaths in that doleful ſenſe, as was threatned, *Levit.* 26. 34. *Then ſhall the Land enjoy its Sabbaths, as long as it lieth deſolate.* And the ſame reaſon may be given now as then, *v.* 35. *As long as it lieth deſolate it ſhall reſt, becauſe it did not reſt in your Sabbaths when ye dwelt upon it.*

MEDITATION VI.

Of Gods contending by Fire, for the ſins of Idolatry and Superſtition.

IDolátry is plainly and properly enough defined, to be the worſhipping of a falſe God (one or more) or elſe of the true God in a falſe manner. The former is expreſly forbidden in the firſt Commandment, which is in theſe words, *Thou ſhalt have no other Gods before me*; but the latter in the ſecond, which ſaith, *Thou ſhalt not make to thy ſelf any graven Image, &c.* that is, Thou ſhalt not worſhip, or pretend to worſhip me in the uſe of Images, or of any thing elſe which I my ſelf have not inſtituted and appointed. Now whereas ſome may think that the worſhipping of graven Images, for Gods, or as if they were Gods themſelves, and not the worſhipping of the true God, in the uſe of them, is the ſin forbidden in the ſecond Commandment, becauſe it is ſaid, *Thou ſhalt not bow down to them, nor worſhip them.* The contrary is evident enough. For the worſhipping of any other beſides the true God, is that which the firſt Commandment doth directly forbid, and

is the ſum and ſubſtance of it; now we muſt not make the firſt and ſecond Commandments one and the ſame. Therefore the ſin forbidden in the ſecond Commandment is the worſhipping of God, in or by the uſe of Images, and other things which he never appointed, as means, methods, and parts of his worſhip. Now this latter branch of Idolatry is the ſame thing with that which is called Superſtition; which is as much as *ſupra ſtatutum*, or a being devout and religious, or rather ſeeming to be ſo, above what is written, or was ever commanded by God. Of the firſt ſort of Idolatry which conſiſts in profeſſedly worſhipping any other beſides the true God, I ſhall need to ſay nothing; becauſe that is the Idolatry of Heathen only, & all Chriſtians profeſs to abhor it. But alas, how many calling themſelves Chriſtians, are not aſhamed to own and defend their worſhipping of Images relatively, (as they term it) though not abſolutely; mediately, though not ultimately. But if we can prove that this was all that many did, whom God was pleaſed to charge with Idolatry, and to puniſh grievouſly, even with Fire, for ſo doing; that will be to the point in hand. See for this *Levit.* 26.31. *I will make your Cities, waſte, & bring your Sanctuaries to deſolation* (which was afterwards done by Fire, when themſelves were carried into captivity, their City and Temple burnt.) Now in what caſe doth God threaten ſo to do, *viz.* in caſe they ſhould offer to ſet up any Images, to bow down to them. *v.* 1. and ſhould not repent of their ſo doing after they had been warned by leſſer judgments: *If ſo*, ſaith God, *I will make your Cities waſte:* and ſo

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he did by Fire, for that very ſin. Now the people thus threatned were the *Iſraelites*, who had ſo much knowledge of the true God, that it was impoſſible for them to think that thoſe ſtocks and ſtones which they did bow to, were God himſelf; but only they made them as repreſentations and memorials of God (or little Temples for God to repair to, if he pleaſed; or as lures to draw God to them (as one calleth them) and yet for this, they are charged with Idolatry; for thoſe very Images are called *their Idols*, *v.1. Te ſhall make ye no Idols, or graven Images*; and by the greatneſs of that puniſhment which God inflicted for the ſame, we may gather he reckoned it as Idolatrie, for it was that ſin if any. Moreover, that they intended no more by their Images, than only pictures and reſemblances of God, is intimated to us by thoſe words, *Deut.4.15. Take heed unto your ſelves, for ye ſaw no manner of Similitude, on the day that the Lord ſpake unto you in Horeb, out of the midſt of the Fire.v.16. Leſt you make you an Image, the ſimilitude of any figure.* As if he had ſaid, that God did therefore forbear at that time to aſſume any viſible ſhape, becauſe he would not have any repreſentations made of him, which to doe were Idolatrie; at leaſtwiſe, if done in order to religious worſhip. Were not *Aaron* and the *Iſraelites* charged with Idolatrie, for making, and cauſing to be made, a Golden calf, *Exod. 32. 4.* and ſacrificing to it *v. 5. &c.* (yet that people were far from thinking the Calf they had made, to be the true God that brought them out of *Egypt*) No, they had made it for a repreſentation, and a memorial of him: For ſo they are to be under-

ſtood, *v.* 4. Could any of them ſo far renounce reaſon, and common ſenſe (leaſt of all could *Aaron* do ſo) as to think that Image brought them out of *Egypt*, which was no Image till after their comming out of *Egypt*, which had not been what it was, but that they made a Calf of it? which they knew, of its ſelf was neither able to do good nor evil. No ſurely, their intent was to ſet up that only as a memorial of God, and to worſhip God in and by it. For this *Moſes* was ſo angry with them, and with the puppet which they had made, that as we read *v.*20. *He took the Calf, burnt it in the fire, ground it to powder, and ſtrewed it upon the water, and made them drink of it.* The Apoſtle calls them Idolaters, 1 *Cor.* 10. 6. *Neither be ye Idolaters, as were ſome of them*; which is quoted out of *Exod.* 32.6. If there were no Idolatry in the Golden-calf ſo intended, why was *Moſes* ſo angry with it? yea, why was God ſo angry with them, as by *Moſes* to give charge to the ſons of *Levi*, to ſlay every man his brother, and his companion, and his neighbour? *v.* 27. and all for their ſin in reference to that Golden-calf? and in *v.*10. ſaid God to *Moſes*, *Let me alone that my wrath may wax hot againſt them, and that I may conſume them.* By which we may plainly ſee, that the Idolatrie I have been ſpeaking of, which is againſt the ſecond Commandment kindleth fires, as well as that which is againſt the firſt Commandment Therefore a Caveat is entred againſt Graven images, *Deut.* 4. 23. upon the account of Gods being a conſuming fire, and a jealous God; a fire that can burn, and full of jealouſie (which is the rage of God as well as of man)

man) so that he will not spare in the day of his anger.

Now if any should think it harsh to call that which is intended as the worship of the true God, by the name of worshipping Idols, when Idols are made use of only as memorials of God, and helps to worship; let them consider, that if such worship any thing really and truly, it is the Idol that is before them: for it must be either that, or God; it is not God they worship, for he accepts it no more than if they had *cut off a dogs neck, or offered swines blood*, *Isa.* 66. 3. See *Acts* 7. 43. *O ye house of Israel, have ye offered to me slain beasts, and sacrifices by the space of forty years? yea, ye took up the Tabernacle of Moleck.* He denies they offered to him, because they corrupted his worship, and so in effect he was not worshipped at all. *Amos* 5. 25. and *Isa.* 1. 11. *Bring no more vain Oblations.* Therefore such persons doing that which God accounts no worship to himself, are said to worship the Idol they pretend to worship by; and so to bless an Idol. *Isa.* 66. 3. and in 1 *Cor.* 10. 20. *The things which the Gentiles sacrificed, they sacrificed to devils, not to God*; not that they intended their Sacrifices for the service of devils; least of all, when they offered their sons and daughters. *Psal.* 106. 37. Yet because it was a sacrifice acceptable to the devil, and abominable to God, it is said, that *they sacrificed their sons and their daughters to devils.* That is, to the *Idols of Canaan*, which they took for their Gods, and not for devils, *v.* 38. But moreover,

God punished worshipping by Idols, as if it were worshipping of Idols: because the former

leads to the latter; and will introduce it in time, and presently too, amongst a great many. Many that are taught to worship before Images, cannot distinguish of doing it Relatively not Absolutely, mediately, and not ultimately; and so they do it absolutely and not relatively, ultimately and not mediately. Idols are brought in by the help of distinctions, but when once brought in, the distinctions are forgotten, and the Idols only are remembred, and the more ignorant sort of people will turn perfect heathens, that is, worshippers of stocks and stones. The jealous God fore-seeing this, forbids all use of Images in and about his worship, seeing that kind of dalliance and kissing the calves, will end at last in going a whoring from him, by such Idolatrie as was amongst the blindest Heathens. Now God would prevent the in-lets of evil, and therefore he would not permit the Nazarites so much as to eat the stones of Grapes, lest it should bring them by degrees to drink Wine, which they had vowed against; so neither will he suffer men to worship by, or in the use of Images, lest they come at last to worship Images themselves. And to the end the worship of God might be kept pure, care is taken in the second Commandment, that men should present God with nothing as either *medium*, or *pars cultus*, but what himself hath prescribed; for by the same reason that worshipping by Graven-images is forbidden, are we prohibited the use of every other thing, as any means or part of divine worship which God hath not instituted. Hence those words, *Mark* 7. 7. *In vain do you worship me, teaching*

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for doctrine the traditions of men. For the Phariſees, to place Religion in waſhing before they eat (whereas it was no more but cleanlineſs) *Mark* 7.3. was very diſpleaſing to our Saviour Chriſt, *Paul* was very angry with thoſe that pretended to a voluntarie humilitie, in worſhipping Angels, *Col.*2.18. that is, they gave out that men ought to go to God by the mediation of Angels, as being the more reverent way of addreſſing to God: but *Paul* ſaith, *they were vainly puft up with their fleſhly mind*, for that they intruded into thoſe things, which they had not ſeen any warrant for in Gods Word. And as for thoſe *Galathians* that did obſerve daies, and moneths, and times, and years, the Apoſtle ſaith plainly, *he was afraid he had beſtowed upon them labour in vain*; namely, becauſe they thought to pleaſe, and to worſhip God, in and by thoſe things which were never of his own appointment. I wiſh then that whoſoever ſhall read this Chapter, may become convinced, if not ſo before, how greatly the ſins of Idolatrie and ſuperſtition do provoke God, and kindle the fire of his wrath. *Saul* gave *Samuel* a ſuperſtitious reaſon, why the people took of the Sheep and Oxen, the chief of the things which ſhould have been utterly deſtroied; namely, that it was to ſacrifice to the Lord in *Gilgal.* Yet this their devotion, beſides, and contrarie to Gods command, is called *Rebellion*, and ſaid to be *as the ſin of witchcraft:* and as for Idolatrie, if Idolaters do in Gods account ſacrifice to devils: how juſt is it for Idolatrie to be reckoned as the ſin of witchcraft. 1 *Sam.* 15.23. Witches are burnt by the Laws of our Land. Now if that which God

calls Witchcraft, should grow common amongst us, *viz.* Idolatrie, so called also in 2 *Kings* 9. 22. which God forbid, and the wisdome of our Governours will (I hope seek to prevent) we may expect more burning yet behind, and such a fire of judgment to ensue, as will consume us to utter and endless destruction. Now Lord, if those men whose Religion teacheth them to insist upon their merits, and if others have merited also, to flie to their works of supererogation, (as their manner is to idolize themselves, and their own works) if such shall attempt to break in upon us like a flood, grant that thy Spirit poured out upon our Rulers, may lift up its self as a standard against them.

MEDITATION VII.

Of Oppression, Theft, Deceit, false Ballances, mentioned in Scripture, as causes of God's contending by Fire.

I Am forced to put several sins together, that have affinity each with other, because there are so many to which the judgment of fire is attributed, (or against which it is threatned) that to consider them singlely, would take up too much time and room: I finde God threatning the *Jews Ezek.* 22. 20. That he would put them into a Furnace, leave them there, and melt them. And the cause thereof is assigned, *vers.* 29. The people of the Land have used oppression, and have

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vexed the poor and needy, yea they have oppreſſed the ſtranger wrongfully, *verſ.* 31. Therefore have I conſumed them with the fire of my wrath. And *Amos* 5. 11. Foraſmuch then as your treading is upon the poor, and ye have taken from him burthens of wheat, yee have built houſes of hewen ſtone, but ye ſhall not dwell in them, &c.

And then for *Theft*, ſee *Ezek.* 22. 29. The people of the Land have exerciſed robbery: and *Zechary* 5. 4. The curſe ſhall enter into the houſe of the thief, and ſhall conſume it, with the timber thereof, and with the ſtones thereof.

And laſtly, as for deceit and falſe ballances, ſee *Amos* 8. 5. Hear yee this, that ſay, when will the Sabbath be over, that we may ſet forth wheat, making the *Ephah* ſmall, and the *Shekell* great, that we may falſify the ballances by deceit? Take notice that the judgments denounced againſt that people, are generally thus expreſſed, I will ſend a fire, &c. *Chap.* 10. 2. Now one cauſe was their deceit and falſe ballances.

Now were not the ſins forementioned too too common in the Land, and in the great City which is now ruined? Did not many rich men oppreſs the poor by griping uſury, extorting, brokage, taking unmerciful forfeitures of pawns, and pledges, by ingroſſing of commodities, and ſelling them at unreaſonable rates, by vexatious ſuites, by taking them at advantages, by working upon their neceſſities, by with-holding thoſe debts and dues which poor men had not wherewithall to recover, and ſeveral other wayes? For I pretend not to know the one half of that myſtery of iniquity. Did not rich Lawyers oppreſs

preſs their poor Clients, rich Phyſicians their poor Patients, rich Landlords their poor Tenants, raiſing and racking their rents? Did they not grinde the faces of the poor, as it were to powder? and when time ſerved, and particularly when the fire was, did not the poor ſhew, their hearts ſerved them to oppreſs the rich? If theft did not abound, why were ſo many condemned almoſt every Monethly Seſſions upon that account? (beſides many that eſcaped undiſcovered) how came it to paſs, that there was a formal ſociety and corporation of theeves, keeping a kind of order and government amongſt themſelves? Then as for deceit and falſe ballances, I doubt thoſe things were more common than either of the two former; though they might juſtly bear the name of either, *viz.* of deceit or theft, though they went not commonly by the name of either. How much bad money was knowingly put off, braſs pieces, light gold, and ſuch like? how many unſerviceable wares were vended at dear rates? how many rich commodities were ſophiſticated, as Wines, Phyſical Drugs, and the like, to the great hazard, of Mens health and lives? What traſh was vended for Pearl, and Beazar, and for other high prized things? All was lookt upon as cleer gaines by many, in which they could but over-reach others, though the Scripture ſaith, let no Man defraud his brother, for God is an avenger of all ſuch things. If a Man had not his wits about him, he could go into few places, and not be cheated, whatſoever he bought, if he did not underſtand it himſelf: ſo that it grew a proverb, that Men knew not who to truſt. Men would

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ask twice as much as they could take, and yet would have taken all they did ask, if the buyer would have given it. As for falſe ballances, let the Queſts that went about, ſpeak what ill weights they found in many places, heavier to buy by, and lighter to ſell by. Let the full Baskets of Bread which were given away almoſt every Market-day, becauſe too light to be ſold, beare witneſs. Why was ſo much butter and bread taken from the owners, and ſent to the Priſons, but for want of due weight? If men did uſe falſe ballances in ſo cheap Commodities, and that were to come under the teſt, what did they not do in thoſe that were dearer, & they generally left to their own conſciences? in things as to which one dram of weight more or leſs would turn to more profit than many loaves of bread, or pounds of butter?

I doubt not but there were thoſe, and not a few, that would not have wronged a cuſtomer in one grain of weight for the greateſt profit: but were not the generality of Tradeſmen for all they could get, *Per fas, aut nefas*, that is, by hook or by crook? Reflecting upon the great deceit and cheating there was: I wonder not that *Conſtantinople* ſtands, whilſt *London* lies in aſhes: For if we may believe travellers, amongſt the very *Turks* there was more common juſtice, that is, righteouſneſs and freedome from deceit in buying and ſelling, than amongſt us. Righteous art thou O Lord, yet let me plead with thee concerning thy judgments, why were their ſhops and houſes burnt down that uſed no deceit? (and there were many ſuch) but as for others, thy juſtice doth moſt manifeſtly appear in ſcourge-

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ing those buyers and sellers out of house and home, by a fiery Rod, who turned the famous City (which should have been a Mountain of righteousness and justice) into a Den of theeves and robbers.

MEDITATION VIII.

Of lying, swearing, and for-swearing, as further causes of God's contending by Fire.

I finde the Prophet *Nahum. chap.* 3. threatning *Nineveh* with fire, in the 13. and 15. verses of that Chapter. The fire shall devour thy bars, &c. now one cause he gives of that wo, was lying, *vers.* 1. *Woe to the City, it is full of lies and robbery.* Fitly are those two put together, for probably many or most of the lies they had wont to tell, were in a way of trade, in order to unjust gain, which is no other than robbery in Gods account. Oh that *London*, in this respect, had not been another *Nineveh*, for the multitude of lies that were daily told in many parts of it, in order to robbery, that is, undue gain: A good man would not have told so many wilful lyes, for a whole World, as some would tell, to get a few shillings, if not pence. This cost me so much, saith one, and by and by he sells it for less than he said it cost him, (which few men will do) you shall have the very best, saith another, and yet if he have any worse than other, puts him off with that. I had so much for the very fellow of this, had some wont to say, when there was no such matter. This is as good as can be bought for money

money, would ſome ſay, when yet they knew that it was ſtark naught, could ſuch pretend themſelves to be the people of God? who ſaith, *Iſa.* 63. 8. *They are my people, Children that will not lie, ſo I was their Saviour.* Could men thus abound with lies, and yet believe what is written. *Rev.* 21. 8. *All lyars ſhall have their portion in the Lake that burneth with Fire and Brimſtone:* No wonder it that which kindles Hell it ſelf, did help to fire a City.

But to paſs on to the ſin of Swearing, either falſly or vainly, both of which were too common in the great City, till the very time of its deſtruction by fire, (though poſſibly as common or more in ſome other place.) Was it conſidered at leaſtwiſe, it is now time to conſider what is ſpoken, *Zach.* 5. 4. *The curſe ſhall enter into the Houſe of him that ſweareth falſly by my Name, and ſhall conſume it, with the timber and ſtones thereof.* How was the Land over-run with perjury? What if few cauſes were tried, in which there was not oathes againſt oathes, men and Women ſwearing point blank one againſt another? Both could not be true: *Contradictoria non poſſent eſſe ſimul vera,* How ordinary was it with men to ſwear, what was impoſſible for them to perform? How have oathes been bought and ſold? were there not thoſe that made a trade of ſwearing, (Knights of the Poſt men called them) they would pleaſure any man with an oath, that would but pay them for it. How many have preſumed, they could carry almoſt any Cauſe, defend any title, how bad ſoever, by a pack of ſwearers, which were ready to ſerve them upon all occaſions? As long as they could have oathes

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for their money, they feared nothing. *England* hath driven a mighty trade in oathes, forward and backward, and made them so common, that with many men, they are grown contemptible, and they have learnt to play with them, as is said of some, that they use *Ludere Juramentis ut pueri tesseris*. Alas, how many made nothing of it, to swear a hundred oathes, they would do this or that; as namely, they would pay such a debt by such a time, and yet never mean to do it? O *England*, if thou hadst no sin but this, it were no marvel that this Metropolis should now lye in the dust. For such oathes as these doth the great City (that was) yea and the whole Land suffering with it, mourn at this day. Though some have exposed themselves to temporal ruine, for fear of oathes, yet have not others desperately said, they would not be undone by refusing oathes of what kind soever? they would trust God with their soules, and not men with their estates. If this sin were not as oile to the late flames, I know not what was. It is no whit strange that false swearing should be punished with temporal fire, when meer lying or false speaking is threatned with that fire which is eternal. *Rev.* 21.8.

But then, as for vain swearing, how common was it; as if men had never heard of the third Commandment, which saith, *Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain, for he will not hold them guiltless.* Vain Oaths flew about like so much Musket-shot, when two armies are in fight, so that they struck every man (his ears at leastwise) that went along the streets. Who that heard the needless Oaths men had wont to swear, could but think of *Davids* words?

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Be not merciful to any that transgress without a cause. I am confident there were some that took a great pride in swearing, and thought it a great piece of Gentility to abound in Oathes, though many Tinkers and Tapsters could swear as fast as they: but could they have had the monopoly of swearing to themselves, and a prohibition upon all poor men to swear, as wel as they, would they not have accounted it a very great honour and priviledge? Thus did they glory in their shame. Unless they vaunted themselves, in shewing how bold they did dare to make with God, I see not why they should be proud of their vain swearing. What wit was there in rapping out an oath? Or what fool could not utter as many oathes as they? who was so silly as to honour them for their swearing? Or who did the rather believe them for it? yea who did not infer, that, because they would swear without cause, they would also lie? How did men bid a daily defiance to that text that saith? Above all things swear not? and practise, as if St. *James* had said, my brethren, above all things swear: When *London* was become as full of oathes, (as the aire is of motes) (which spake the tongues of men to be set on fire of hell) no wonder that there came a flying roll filled with a curse, which consumed the timber thereof, and demolished the stones thereof. *Zach.* 5. 4. May then the horrid sins of lying, swearing, and forswearing, be buried as it were in *London*'s ruines, so as never to rise up more; and may the late Inhabitants of the same mourne, as it were in dust and ashes, for those great provocations, and if ever *London* be its self again, may he pass for a mon-

monſter, and become a hiſſing and by-vvord that after ſo great a vvarning, ſhall preſume to ſvvear falſly or vainly, or ſo much as to utter a vvilfull lie.

MEDITATION IX.

Of the abounding of Drunkenneſs, as one cauſe of the Fire.

VVHo can think of *England's*, yea of *London's* ſins, and not remember Drunkenneſs, vvhich did ſo much abound? Or vvho can think of the fire, and that ſin together, and not recount that paſſage, *Nahum.* 1. 10. *Whilſt they are drunk as Drunkards, they ſhall be devoured as ſtubble fully drie.* Methinks it vvas but yeſterday ſince *London* vvas as dry ſtubble before that Fire, vvhich the bruitiſh ſin of drunkenneſs, amongſt others, did help to kindle. What havock that very ſin can make, vve may read, *Iſa.* 28. 1, 2. *Woe to the Drunkards of Ephraim. Behold the Lord hath a mighty and ſtrong one,* (ſuch vvas our fire) *which as a tempeſt of haile, and a deſtroying ſtorme, as a flood of mighty Waters overflowing, ſhall caſt down to the Earth with the hand.* Was not that *Dutch*-ſin of Drunkenneſs grovvn to a very great heighth amongſt us? Whilſt vve vvere in War vvith their Nation, vve vvere in league vvith their grand vice, vve vvere not more enemies to them than friends to it. *Paul* obſerves in his time, that *Thoſe that were drunk, were ſo in the night.* 1 *Theſ.* 5. 7. Better ſo than in the day time, becauſe it ſpake them aſhamed of vvhat they

they did, but so were not many of those Drunkards that helpt to fire the City, who had the boldness to reele and stagger along the streets all hours of the day, so declaring their sins like *Sodom*.

Great ones had taken up that pittiful sin, which men of their quality in former time had wont to scorn? As they would have scorned to steale, so as much almost to have been drunk: Was not the Proverb in old time, as drunk as an Ape, afterwards it came to be, as drunk as a beggar, but now they say the Proverb is, as drunk as a Lord. There seemes to be a design amongst some men to bring sin in credit, and to overthrow that saying of *Solomon*, that *Sin is the reproach of any people*. Some think by their own espousing of this or that sin, to put honour upon it, (as a Nobleman that by marrying of a Chambermaid, advanceth her to the title of a Countess.) But alas they will finde that be they ever so honourable, sin can truly debase them, but they by their practise, can never make sin its self truly honourable. Woe unto us that those sins should now be clad in scarlet, which formerly did no more than imbrace dunghils, which were in use amongst few, but those mean and sordid persons that did well become a Cage, or Stocks, or Whipping-post, the just reward of their intemperance. We had wont to look upon drunken Gods (such as *Bacchus*) as only the fictions of Poets; but have we not seen such things too often verified, if men in authority be a kinde of Gods, as the Scripture calls them. But if such Gods as those expect adoration, few there are that can heartily give it them, or half that re-

verence, which as Magistrates is their due. Drunkennes did so abound amongst all sorts, that I perswade my self, more good liquors were sacrificed to Mens lusts, than were spent upon their necessities. It grew to be matter of emulation amongst many men, who should be able to drink most: such as were strong in the sense spoken of, *Isa.* 8. 22. *Woe to them that are mighty to drink wine*; began to glory in that their woful strength. He was accounted a brave fellow that could drink down others under the Table, and keep above board himself. Drinking with many was the work of the day, and the work of the night, intituling them to that woe: *Isa.* 5. 11. *Woe to them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that continue till night, till Wine inflame them.* Many forsook their callings for it in the day time, and their sleep in the night. As some have their incentives to lust, so had not a few their provocations of drunkennes, by their salt meates, and such like waies, adding to drunkennes thirst, that to thirst they might add the more pleasing drunkennes. As light as some would make of this, it hath many great sins in the womb of it, and many sad consequences following of it. Oh! the woful neglect of Mens callings, both general and particular, whilst they lay in Taverns from day to day. Oh! the mis-spence of precious time that never can be recalled. Oh! the wasting of mens estates, and making themselves worse than Infidels, by not providing for their Families, whilst they made provision for their lusts. Oh! the abuse of Gods good creatures to luxury, whilst others wanted them for their necessity. Oh! the abuse

that

that men offered to themſelves, to their perſons, their parts, their places and offices, wherwith they were intruſted, and to the image of God, which is upon them as men.

London in its ruines is not more unlike to what it was in its proſperity, than ſome men by noon would be unlike what themſelves were in the morning, more than ordinary men were they when they roſe; They could have ſpoke to any caſe, diſpatched any buſineſs, turned their hands to any affair, military or civil: but leſs than men, ere they went to Bed again, and for the time almoſt as much altered as *Nebuchadnezzar* was, when turned amongſt the beaſts of the field. If an enemy were at hand ready to cut our throats, they have neither heads to adviſe, nor legges to ſtand upon, nor hands to fight, were it to ſave their own lives, who have all of theſe when they are themſelves. Now nothing but ribbaldry and bawdery, and non-ſenſe is to be expected from them. Silly looks and antick actions: one while you have them ſpuing like ſwine that had gorged themſelves; another while tumbling in their own vomit, like Sowes in the mire; other-while you had them wrangling and quarrelling with every body, as if they would kill and ſlay all they came neer; other-while you might have ſeen them all in gore blood, upon ſome groundleſs ſcuffle they had, *Prov.* 23. 29. *Who hath contentions, who hath wounds without cauſe, they that tarry long at the Wine.* And what comes next, ſee *verſ.* 33. *Thine eyes ſhall behold ſtrange women: verſ.* 34. *Yea thou ſhalt be as he that lieth down in the midſt of the Sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a Maſt,* that is, in eminent danger.

Neither will they be warned by that, for it is ſaid, *verſ.* 35. *When ſhall I awake? I will ſeek it yet again.* If this were the trade that many drove (as certainly it was) if they took this courſe (as it were) to drown the City, no wonder that God hath deſtroyed it another way, *viz.* by Fire.

Men were grown into ſtrange methods of drinking, (as I may call it) they would enforce their company to drink healths, that is *Æqualis caliees.* They would have all to drink alike, or equal cups, though all could not bear it alike, as if a kind of uniformity were neceſſary in drinking, as well as in other things: I forbear to ſpeak how the weaker veſſels, did ſometimes make too bold with the ſtronger liquors, (and to the ſhame of their Sex) there were ſhe-drunkards as well as others. Things being brought to this paſs, men would have thought that God had been ſuch a one as themſelves, if his wrath had not been revealed from heaven in ſome remarkable judgment. But now he that runs may read, that our God is an enemy, as to other ſins, ſo particularly to that beaſtly vice of drunkenneſs. I had thought here to have diſmiſſed the good fellowes, (as they call themſelves) but a ſtrange fancy came in my head, and it was this, that if your great drunkards were able to retain all they receive, and to give it out as good as they took it in, a few of them might be able to furniſh a well-cuſtom'd Vintner with as much Wine of ſeveral ſorts, as would ſerve him a good while for his occaſions, and each of them (upon one years collection) (O monſters of men) might contain and yield more than the greateſt

Casks

Casks that Vintners do ever uſe. Did theſe men look upon *London* as a body, ſurely they took themſelves to be the Glandulæ or kernels to which it belongs, to ſuck up ſuperfluous moiſtures, or did they look upon themſelves as the ſinks and common ſhoares, that all liquors were to paſs through, or to paſs into. Let me ſpeak a warm word to you, O yee *Diveſes*, that uſe to drink Wine in Bowls till it inflame you; if yee repent not, the time is haſtning in which you will want water to cool your tongues, and you that now indulge your ſelves great draughts, will be to ſeek for one drop. Conſider two texts well, and then be drunk if you dare, *viz.* 1 *Cor.* 6. 10. *Drunkards ſhall not inherit the kingdome of God.* Alſo *Luke* 12. 46. *If that ſervant ſhall ſay, my Maſter delayeth his coming, and ſhall begin to drink, and to be drunken. The Lord of that ſervant will come when he is not aware, and will cut him in ſunder, and appoint him his portion with unbelievers.*

MEDITATION X.

Of God's puniſhing a People by Fire, for their great unprofitableneſs.

I Meet with a plain denunciation of fire againſt *Jeruſalem*, *Ezek.* 15. 6, 7. *As the Vine-Tree which I have given to the fire for fewell, ſo will I give the Inhabitants of Jeruſalem. They ſhall go out from one Fire, and another Fire ſhall devour them.* Be the Fire there ſpoken of, literal or analogical, it may come all to one. For what is

Fire equivalently, is as terrible as what is really ſo. Now, if I miſtake not, great unprofitableneſs was the ſin for which God did threaten that Fire. See *v.* 2. and ſo onwards, *What is the Vine-tree* (intending to compare the Jews thereunto) *ſhall Wood be taken thereof to do any work? or will men take a pin of it to hang any veſſell thereon? v.* 5. *Behold when it was whole it was meet for no work; how much leſs ſhall it be meet for any work, when the Fire hath devoured it, and it is burnt?* As if God had told them, that they were become as uſeleſs and good for nothing, as is a branch of the Vine cut off from the Tree, and half burnt in the Fire. Now for this it was that God told them, he would give them for fewel to the Fire, that were good for nothing but to burn. May I preſume to ſay (and why ſhould I not, it being manifeſtly true,) *London* did ſwarm, and a reſidue of *England* at this day doth ſwarm with uſeleſs perſons, who did and do drink in the former and latter rain of Gods good Ordinances and Bleſſings; but have brought, and do bring forth nothing but briars and thorns; and concerning ſuch ground, the Scripture ſaith, *That it is nigh unto a curſe, and the end of it is to be burned. Heb.* 6. 8.

It will be enough for me to tell what perſons may be juſtly reckoned unprofitable, and then leave it to others to judge, if there are not, and were not many ſuch in the midſt of us, of all ſorts and conditions, though bleſſed be God all were not ſuch. He is an unprofitable Chriſtian whoſe converſe edifies no body; neither doth his communication miniſter grace to any that hear it. He is an unpofitable maſter of a family, or parent,

rent, who takes no care with *Joshua*, that his family might serve the Lord; nor doth command his children and houshold to keep the way of the Lord, as God testifies for *Abraham* that he would do, *Gen.* 18.19. or that with old *Eli*, suffers those that are under his command to do what they list. He is an unprofitable Magistrate, that is neither a terror to evil doers, nor an encouragement to them that do well; but much more, if *vice versâ*, he doth worse than bear the sword in vain. He is an unprofitable Minister, that neither instructs the people by wholsome doctrine, nor by a holy life; that wants both *Urim* and *Thummim*, that doth not calculate his Sermons for the good of souls; that either shoots over peoples heads, by too much profundity and ostentation of Learning, such as they understand not, or shoots under their feet, by such weak and senseless discourses as make both his person and doctrine contemptible. He that treats his people, as if Non-sense were the only Nectar and Ambrosia for immortal people to feed upon, (as one phraseth it.) In a word, he that studies only to provoke his soules by medling with what he should not; or only to please them, by not medling with what he should: and lastly, he that fleeceth the flock, but feeds it not, is an unprofitable Minister, if he may so much as be called a Minister. Again, he is unprofitably knowing and learned, that suffers no body to be the better (or as we say, the wiser) for his knowledge and learning, though he might.

To be useless out of necessity, is but a mans misery; but to be so out of choice, is a very

great ſin; and yet a greater ſin it is to make many more uſeleſs as well as our ſelves, by that old rule, *Quod efficit tale, eſt magis tale.* The Phariſees who ſhut up the Kingdom of Heaven againſt men, neither going in themſelves, nor ſuffering others that would, to enter, *Matth.* 23. 13. were worſe than unprofitable. Again, they are unprofitably rich, who have great eſtates, but no hearts to do good with them; or to make to themſelves friends of the unrighteous Mammon, or to lend to God, in giving to the poor, that they might be repaied with the moſt gainful intereſt. Such as are ſpoken of *Jam.* 5. 2. *Whoſe riches are corrupted, and their garments are moth-eaten; their gold and ſilver is cankered, and the ruſt of them is a witneſs againſt them.* But eſpecially ſuch who are ſo far from being merciful, notwithſtanding their great eſtates, that they cannot finde in their hearts to be juſt, *Jam.* 5. 4. *Behold the hire of the labourers, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth.* God hath ſent them great crops, and they thought much to pay poor men for reaping of them. *The cries of them which have reaped, are entred into the ears of the Lord God of Sabbaoth*; that is, of Hoſts; who is pleaſed ſometimes to fall upon ſuch miſers in a hoſtile way, even by Fire and Sword, and ſnatch that from them, which they would not voluntarily part with to any good uſes. Moreover, he is an unprofitable member of a Town, County, or Kingdom, that only ſeeks great things for himſelf, and cares not what becomes of the publick weale: whereas we ſee that things without life, as Aire and Water, and ſuch like, will forſake their own centers, and vary from their

natural

natural motion, to comply with the good of the Universe, by preventing a *vacuum*. But worse than unprofitable are they, who as our Proverb speaks, Do set other mens houses on fire to roast their own egges; that is, do others the greatest mischief, to do themselves a small courtesie. Lastly, he is an unprofitable member of the world, who lives meerly to eat and drink, and rise up to play. The Apostle saith, that *the widdow who liveth in pleasure, is dead whilst she liveth*. *Seneca* would say, such men might be said to be (or have a being) but not to live. People that have no calling, nor know how to betake themselves to any, but to be servants to divers lusts and pleasures, to read Romances and Play-books, and wanton Poems, to run about to Play-houses, to court Ladies, to talk idly to women, that love such discourse; to pass the time in Cards, and Dice, and Wine, and Jests, when the weather constrains them to be within doors; and at other times in Hunting and Hawking, and Fishing, and such-like divertisements. Of such voluptuosoes (if I may so call them) we read, *Job* 22.12. *They take the Timbrel and Harp, and rejoyce at the sound of the Organ. They spend their daies in mirth, &c. and in a moment go down to the grave.* As they say, it is a Proverb amongst theeves, A merry life, and a short life. For many such persons do shorten their daies by their excess, as to Wine and Women, and ride post out of the world upon the back of those head-strong lusts which run away with them. The persons I have described are past all question useless, and meer cumbergrounds; like dead trees, fit for nothing but to burn.

I shall not take the boldness to say that *England* doth, and *London* did, abound with such persons as these; or that such walking carkasses carried about by that evil spirit that possessed them, and did as it were assume them, were to be seen every day; but whether it were so or no, they better know that know *London*, & know all *England* better than I pretend to do. And if it were so indeed, it is not so much wonder that the houses of such men were burnt, as that their persons did escape, or that God did not rather consume their persons, and spare their houses; like Lightning, that spares the Scabbard, and melts the Sword. Sin had made a great part of the inhabitants, as much dry wood in one sense, as want of rain had made their houses such. I marvel not then that so great a Fire approaching such prepared fewel both within and without, did so much execution, but rather that it did no more. May the issue of that dismal Fire which was lately amongst us be the same that husbandmen effect or design in burning their Lands, *viz.* that we, as they, which before were barren and unprofitable, may become useful and fruitful, which Lord grant for Christ his sake.

MEDITATION XI.

Of the universal Corruption and Debauchery of a people, punished by God with Fire.

I Need not go far from that Text on which I grafted the next preceding meditation; To finde another that will plainly prove the universal

verſal corruption and degeneration of a people, to have as it were inforced God, though he be ſlow to anger, and rich in mercy, to contend with them by Fire, yea and conſume them. The ſame Prophet furniſheth me with a large inſtance in that kind, too large to tranſcribe; and therefore I ſhall rehearſe but part of it, and refer to the reſt. For it reacheth from *Ezek.* 22.19. to the end of the 31 verſe. *Thus ſaith the Lord, becauſe ye are all become droſs, therefore I will gather you into the midſt of Jeruſalem, v.20. as ſilver into the midſt of a furnace, and I will leave you there, and melt you. v.22. And ye ſhall know that I the Lord have poured out my fury upon you.* That they were all become Droſs, ſignifies no more but this, that they were univerſally depraved and debauched, as appeareth plainly by that Indictment which is given in againſt their Prieſts and Prophets, and Princes, and common people, that is, againſt perſons of all ranks and conditions, in the ſequel of the Chapter. The like charge there is to be found, *Iſa.* 9. 27. *For every one is an hypocrite, and an evil doer, and every mouth ſpeaketh folly. v.* 14. *Therefore the Lord will cut off from Iſrael head and tail, branch and ruſh in one day. v.*18. *For wickedneſs burneth as the fire, it ſhall devour the briars and the thorns.* That is, the wicked amongſt them, the beſt of which was as a briar, or as a thorny hedg. It is ſad to conſider, that there have been certain times in which no ſort of men have kept themſelves pure and unſpotted, but all have defiled their garments, in which the fire of ſin hath ſpread as much more than in other ages, as the late Fire upon *London*, ſpread it ſelf beyond all the Fires that City had

had known formerly. Some time before the destruction of the old world by water, it is said, that *All flesh had corrupted his way, Gen.6.11.* and when God was about to rain Fire and Brimstone upon *Sodom*, not ten righteous persons could be found to stand in the gap. And a strange challenge it is which God makes, *Jerem.* 5. 1. *Run through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now and know if ye can finde a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, and seeketh the truth, and I will pardon it.* Is it so with us at this day, or is it not? Are we universally corrupt and degenerate, and debauched, or are we not? Have all sorts of men corrupted their waies, and done abominably, or have they not? Possibly in this our *Sardis* there are some few names that have not defiled their garments: but alas, how few are they? and what are so few names to the generality and body of a Nation? Are those words of *Isaiah* applicable to us or not? *There is no soundness, but wounds and bruises, and putrifying sores, from the sole of the foot, even to the head, Isa.* 1.7. and then followeth, *your Country is desolate, your Cities are burnt with Fire.* Might I take leave to be particular, I would say, that City, and Countrey, and Court, and Inns of Court, and Universities, all have exceedingly corrupted their waies; what a corruption in judgment hath over-spread us? some turning to Socinianism, others to Popery, others to Atheism, yea great (and Leviathan-like) Atheism?

How great a corruption is there at this day in the habits, gates, and gestures of men and women, which I would not trouble my self to speak of; but that as little a thing as it may seem,

ſeem, it is a ſymptome of great evil within; for many times the habits of the mind are ſignified by thoſe of the body. A proud habit and a proud heart, a wanton habit, and a wanton heart, do often, if not alwaies meet. For what modeſt woman would put on the attire of an harlot? or, who cares to make ſhew of more evil than is really in them; and not rather to conceale that which is? A modeſt habit is not ſo ſure a ſign of a chaſte heart (for that may be worn for a cloak of diſ-honeſty) as an immodeſt habit is of one that is unchaſte. For what woman that is conſcious to her own chaſtity, would render her ſelf ſuſpected for a whore? It may ſeem a ſmall matter for ſick people to play with feathers, and to make babies with their ſheets; but it is an uſual fore-runner, and conſequently a ſign of death. So the habits of men and women, when they carry with them a great appearance of Pride, Levity, Wantonneſs, Inconſiſtency of mind, Prodigality, Fantaſtickneſs, Inconſtancy, do give great jealouſie to wiſe men, (who can diſcern much light ſometimes through ſmall crevices) that the Age, or rather perſons of this Age, do abound with ſuch kind of vices, and that there is ſome kind of Fatallity belonging to it, becauſe people uſe ſuch antick poſtures and geſtures, as dying perſons are wont to uſe. I wiſh the fore-mentioned vices had got no neerer men than their skins, that they were but skin-deep, but as the Itch and ſuch like diſeaſes are firſt within, and then ſtrike out, firſt infect the maſs of blood, and not till afterwards, the habit and ſurface of the body; yea and often ſtrike in again, and corrupt the

blood

blood a second time; so it is to be feared, that men and women are generally proud and wanton in heart, before they are so in habit; and become so in habit, because they were first so in heart. Now if the hearts of many be such, as their most fantastick and garish habits make show of; those words of *Solomon*: *Eccles.* 9. 3. Must needs be verified in them, *The heart of the Sons of Men is full of evil, & madness is in their heart whilst they live, &c.* Yet for all this, I would exercise charity concerning the habits of men and women (though that be hard to do) did not the common practise, and course of this Age assure me that it is universally corrupt and degenerate, and as it were, expound the meaning of such suspicious habits.

It is no difficult thing to prove the sins of this Age, because men now adayes declare their sins like *Sodom*, and do as it were, spread a Tent in the face of the Sun, as did *Absalom*. I am much mistaken (and so are many more) if the gross sins of swearing, cursing, Sabbath breaking, drunkenness, whoredome, together with too great a connivance at, and impunity to these and some others, be not more chargable upon *England* at this day, than they had wont to be. Are not these the things which male-contents do alledge to justify their murmurings, though neither are they, or can they be thereby justified, as I have plainly shewed in that Chapter, in which I have discoursed of Rebellion against *Moses* and *Aaron*. We must keep our stations and do our duties, though other men should refuse to do theirs. If a Wife play the harlot, may her Husband in requital commit adultery? no such matter,

ter. This premiſed, I may the more boldly ſay, whatſoever the matter is, and whence ſo ever it comes, a very general corruption there is amongſt us. What is ſaid of the ſoul, *viz.* that it is *Tota in toto, & tota in qualibet parte*, wholly in the whole body, and wholly in every part, may be applied to ſin, as if it were become the very ſoul that did animate and inform the Nation. I was about to ſay: I fear good men are generally not ſo good, as they had wont to be, and bad men are become a great deale worſe: the former having ſuffered, like ſtrong conſtitutions, that have been impaired by bad aire, and the other like unſound bodies, which are almoſt brought to the Grave thereby. And now let me ſay with *Jeremy*: O that my head were a fountain of teares, that I could weep day and night for the corruption (as he ſaid for the deſtruction) of the daughter of my people! and O that I could ſay with *David*, mine eyes run down Rivers of teares, becauſe men keep not thy Laws, at leaſtwiſe that with righteous *Lot*, of whom it is ſaid, without the leaſt hyperbole, that he did vex his righteous ſoul with the converſation of the *Sodomites*, ſo could I mine with the ſins of *England*, mine own and others. O Lord thou ſeeſt, how, even the whole Maſs of *Engliſh* blood is wofully corrupted by ſin, (as it fareth with theſe that have had a Dart ſtruck thorough their Liver, in that ſenſe *Solomon* is by ſome ſuppoſed to intend it, (*viz.* as a periphraſis of the fowle diſeaſe) ſo that there is hardly any good blood in all our veines and arteries, outward applications, whether of judgments or mercies of themſelves cannot cure us. Inwardly cleanſe us we beſeech thee

by

by the inſpiration of thy ſpirit, and purge out Conſciences from dead works to ſerve thee, that thy wrath may no more burn againſt us as Fire, but that at length thou maiſt call us Hepzibah a people in whom thy ſoul may delight.

MEDITATION XII.

Of God's bringing Fire upon a People for their incorrigibleneſs under other Judgments.

WE have already ſpoken of twelve ſeveral cauſes of God's contending with a people by Fire, and yet there is one behind, as much in fault as any of all the reſt, and that is the ſin of incorrigibleneſs: I could preſently produce three ſufficient witneſſes, as it were to depoſe what I ſay. One is that text in *Iſaiah* Chap. 1. verſ. 5, & 7. Compared together, *Why ſhould yee be ſmitten any more, yee will revolt more and more? your Countrey is deſolate, your Cities are burnt with Fire.* The next is, *Iſa.* 9. 13. compared with the 19. *The People turneth not to him that ſmiteth them. Through the wrath of the Lord of Hoſts ſhall the People be as the Fewel of the Fire.* But *Amos* ſpeaks out yet more plainly, if that can be, *Amos* 4. 6. *I have given you cleanneſs of teeth, yet have you not returned to me, ſaith the Lord, verſ.* 8. *I have with-holden the Rain from you, verſ.* 9. *I have ſmitten you with blaſting and mildew, &c. verſ.* 10. *I have ſent among you the Peſtilence, after the manner of Egypt.* Now the burthen of all the Indictment is, *Yet have yee not returned to me, ſaith the Lord.* Then in the next verſe he brings in God

God ſpeaking thus, *I have overthrown ſome of you as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, verſ.* 11. And how was that, but by fire?

So that you ſee the judgment of fire came as it were to avenge the quarrel of other abuſed judgments, when Famine and Peſtilence had done no good upon them, then God uſed Fire, which as being the worſt, was reſerved to the laſt. Moſt of the judgments denounced by *Amos* go under the notion of Fire, *Chap.* 1, & 2. and incorrigibleneſs you ſee is one main reaſon rendered of Gods inflicting thoſe judgment.

Now *England* hold up thy hand at the Bar, and anſwer, Art thou guilty or not guilty of the great ſin of incorrigibleneſs? and you diſperſed inhabitants of that once famous City, which now lieth in the duſt (little did I ever think to have called you by that name) ſpeak out and ſay, were you guilty or not guilty of much incorrigibleneſs under other judgments, before ſuch time as God began to contend with you by that Fire which hath now almoſt conſumed you? Plead your innocency if you can: Either prove you were never warned, or ſufficiently warned by preceding judgments, or make it appear that you took warning, and mended upon it. That war by Sea, which hath been as a bloody iſſue upon the Nation for ſeveral yeares paſt, and is not yet ſtanched, was that no warning piece? That impoveriſhing decay of trade which hath made ſo many murmur, was it no warning to us to repent and reform? If it were a great judgment, did it not call upon us to reform, and if but a ſmall one, why did we ſo much repine at it? That devouring peſtilence which in

one years time ſwept away above a hundred thouſand in and about *London*, was it not a ſufficient warning to us from heaven? Yet after all this, how few did ſmite upon their thighs, and ſaid, what have I done? I doubt few have been the better for all theſe, and many the worſe, who ſince God hath ſo ſmitten us, have revolted more and more, which is ſuch a thing, as if *Jonah* ſhould have preſumed to provoke God more than ever, even then when he was in the great deep, and in the Whales belly; or *Daniel* whilſt he was in the Lions Den, or the three Children in the midſt of the fiery Furnace: I wiſh ſome of our greateſt ſins had not been committed in the time of our greateſt dangers, as is ſpoken to the ſhame of the *Iſraelites*, that they provoked God at the Sea, even at the red Sea. God having threatned that if great judgments do not reform a people, he will ſend yet greater; it is no wonder that it is with *London* as it is, but rather, that the execution of this puniſhment was defer'd ſo long. Concerning Gods heating his Furnace ſeven times hotter for a people, when a more gentle Fire hath not conſumed their droſs, we read *Levit.* 26. 24. *If yee will not be reformed by theſe things, I will puniſh you yet ſeven times for your ſins.* Alſo *ver.* 18. 21, 24, 28. *I will bring ſeven times more Plagues upon you, according to your ſins.* How juſtly may God complain of us, as he did of the *Jewes* in old time. *Jer.* 5. 3. *Thou haſt conſumed them, but they have refuſed to receive correction, they have made their faces harder than a Rock, they have refuſed to return.* God hath made us *as a boiling Pot, but our ſcum is not gone forth of us,* (*Ezek.* 24. 10.) As ſome Children, though their Parents are ſevere enough,

enough, are ſo bad, that one would think they were never corrected, but ſuffered to do what they liſt; ſo hath it been with *England*. Such as is the way of a Ship in the Sea, which leaves no foot-ſteps behind it, whereby it may be ſeen which way it went, when it is out of ſight: So hath it been with the Plague, and Sword, and other judgments in *England*; they have left little or no impreſſion behind them, whereby it might be diſcerned that God hath attempted to reform us by ſuch terrible judgments. We have cauſe to admire that God hath not in wrath ceaſed to puniſh us at the preſent, intending to reſerve us to the day of judgment, and of the perdition of ungodly men to be puniſhed. It is one of the greateſt puniſhments, for God in wrath to give over puniſhing, and to ſay as concerning *Ephraim*, *He is joyned to Idols, let him alone*, or why *ſhould they be ſmitten any more, they will revolt more and more*. It would kill the heart of an underſtanding patient; when very ill, to hear his Phyſician ſay, let him have what he will, and do what he will, for then would he conclude, he takes his condition to be deſperate, and hath no hope of his recovery.

O Lord, ſith thou art pleaſed to condeſcend ſo far, as yet to chaſten us (For what is man that thou ſhouldſt magnify him? that thou ſhouldſt viſit him every morning, and try him every moment? *Job* 7. 18.) intimating thereby, that thou haſt not utterly caſt us off, but art in a way of reclaiming us; be pleaſed to bleſs and ſanctifie thoſe thy chaſtiſements, and do us good by them, as we would do by our Children, if we knew how, or if it were in our power. Thou

canſt make leſs correction if thou ſo pleaſe to work a greater reformation in us. One twig of thy rod, and one laſh of that twig, being ſanctified, will do us more good than a Scorpion that is not. Suffer us no longer by our incorrigibleneſs under judgments, to add contempt and contumacy to all our other ſins, which is able to ſwell a ſmall crime into a hainous offence. When Chriſt who is compared to a refiners fire, *Mal.*3.2. *Shall ſit as a refiner and purifier of Silver, let him purifie thy people, and purge them as Gold and Silver that they may offer to the Lord in righteouſneſs. Then ſhall their Offerings be pleaſant to the Lord*, v. 3, & 4. Do not thou alwaies correct us for our beeing incorrigible, but vouchſafe to correct and cure our incorrigibleneſs it ſelf, ſo ſhalt thou receive more glory, and we ſhall henceforth need leſs correction.

MEDITATION XIII.

Of the Aggravations of the ſins of London.

O *London*, how were thy ſins out of meaſure ſinful? Conſider thy ſins without their aggravations, and I doubt not but there were many places in *England* (proportionably to their bigneſs) more wicked than *London* was; particularly, many Sea-towns, and ſome Inland, moſt conſiſting of Innes and Ale-houſes. But how few of thoſe places that equallized or poſſibly exceeded *London* in wickedneſs, did ever come neer it as in reference to means of grace, and other mercies? I have heard of a Papiſt, who

who in a ſtorm did vow in caſe he were delivered, that he would give to the Virgin *Mary* a Taper no leſs than the Main-maſt of the Ship he was in; but when the ſtorm was over, perfideouſly ſaid, that he would make a Farthing-candle ſerve her turn. Were not the means thou didſt enjoy like the Taper he promiſed, whilſt thoſe which other places enjoyed, were but like the Candle which he performed? Some wicked Towns have been like *Ægypt* for darkneſs, whilſt *London* was like *Goſhen* for light.

Capernaum it ſelf was not more truly lifted up to Heaven in the abundance of means, than *London* had been. For gifts and knowledge, thou wert another Church of *Corinth*. Had the mighty things which have been done in thee, been done in other places, who knows how they might have proved? To be ſure thou haſt had line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little, and there a little. In thee an excellent Sermon might have been heard every day of the week, and oft times more than one in a day. The men that inhabited thee any long time, for their time might have been all of them teachers, though all did not profit accordingly. They could not but know their maſters will if they cared to know it; and therefore if they did it not, were worthy of many ſtripes. I am loath to ſay what courſe fare the ſouls of men had in other places, and what ſhort commons, whilſt thou wert fed to the full. Thou hadſt Quailes, whilſt they had ſcarcely Mannah. Thy Miniſters ſpake like the Oracles of God, whilſt ſome of theirs could hardly ſpeak ſenſe. *Paul* and

Apollos, and *Cephas* were yours, whilst amongst them the blind lead the blind, and no wonder if both fall into the ditch. O *London*, it is impossible thou shouldst sin so cheap as other places might do, considering those words of Christ, *John* 15.22. *If I had not spoken to them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin.* Had thy sins been but motes, there was that sun-shine would have made them all to appear; but alas, how many of them were beams? I know not those sins that were found else-where, that were not to be found in the midst of thee. Though thou hadst the Prophets of God crying to thee early and late, O do not this abominable thing which my soul hateth.

Some body spake long since by way of admiration or aggravation rather; what? go to hell out of *London*; *England* is presumed to have more knowledge in the things of God, than any other part of the world, and *London* than most part of *England*.

Neither did thy means of grace (O *London*) more exceed those of other parts, than thy other mercies did. Hadst thou not the best of every thing? the best houses, the best trades, the best commodities, the best provisions, the best Physicians, Apothecaries, Chirurgeons, Artists, and Artificers in every kind? the best accommodations of all sorts. Whilst the poor Countries were put off with any thing; the very cream of all things was brought to thy hands. Had Farmers wont to live like you Citizens? they drudged, and toiled, lived meanly, fared hardlie, habited themselves in poor and despi-

cable

cable apparrel, contented themſelves with any thing: whilſt you dwelt at eaſe and in pomp, fed high, went gallantly, followed the faſhions, vied with the Court it ſelf. So were you provided for, as if all *England*, yea, as if all the remote parts of the world, as far as both the Indies, had been made for no other end, than to ſerve and ſupply *London*; and their ſheaf, like that of *Joſephs* brethren, to bow to your ſheaf. What did either *London* ſerve the Countrey with, or the Countrey ſerve its ſelfe with, but as I may ſay, the very leavings and refuſe of the City? As the ſpleen and meſentery, and other more ignoble parts are fed with the courſeſt kind of blood, which nature will not offer to the heart and liver; ſo was the Countrey with thoſe mean things which the City did little leſs than diſdain. Yea had not *London*, amongſt other priviledges, greater variety of good company than other places had good Chriſtians, ingenious men in all profeſſions, inſomuch that ſome could no more frame themſelves to live out of *London*, than Fiſh can, to live out of the water.

Theſe things conſidered, *London* proportionably to its priviledges, ſhould have been the beſt place in the whole world. But was it ſo? It is hard, comparing the ſins of one place with another, but ſure I am, the ſins of *London* were many, and great; all its priviledges notwithſtanding. Wonder not then (O *London*) that God hath ſet thee on fire, whilſt other places are yet ſpared: Wert thou as good as other places? (poſſibly ſo) but thou ſhouldeſt have been better than they, for the means and mercies thou haſt enjoyed far above them. Yea wert thou bet-

ter than some other places? (that may be too) but were thou so much better, as thou were happier than they? did thy goodness towards God exceed theirs, as much as his goodness towards thee, exceeded his goodness towards them? Who knows not that to whom much is given, from them much is expected? If they made four talents of two, was it not more than if thou didst make seven talents of five? O Lord, thou hast severely chastened this great City, cause all that are concerned to know, there is a just reason for what thou hast done. That place hast thou known above all other places and hast not dealt so with any people almost, as thou hast dealt with the inhabitants thereof, therefore hast thou punished them for their iniquity. Thou speakest of tribulation upon the Jew first (as being those that had the greatest priviledges) and afterwards upon the Gentiles: so thou hast begun with *London* first, it being but equal they should first drink of the cup of misery, who have drunk deepest of the cup of abused mercy. Should *Londons* punishments be alwaies so much greater than those of other places, as her mis-improved priviledges have been, would not she that was first, become last? she that was the head become the tail, she that was the happiest, become of all Cities and places, most miserable? May the Repentance of that once great City be such, & such thy favour and good will towards it, that it may sit once more as a Queen, & wear that Crown of honour and dignity, which till all earthly things shall be dissolved, may never fall more from its head.

FINIS

PHYSICAL Contemplations;

OF THE

Nature, and Natural-Cauſes

OF

FIRE,

Morally Applied.

BY

SAMUEL ROLLS,

Miniſter of the Word, and ſometime Fellow of *Trinity-Colledge* in *Cambridge.*

LONDON,

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PHYSICAL
Discemplations;

OR

H[illegible]

Morally Applied.

SAMUEL ROGERS,
Author of the Voyage and Pomeline

To his Highly Honoured Friends

Dr. GEORGE BATE

HIS

MAJESTIES

Learned Proto-medicus,

And to Doctor

JOHN MICKLETHVVAITE,

To Doctor

EDMOND TRENCH,

To Doctor

THOMAS COXE

One of his Majesties Physicians,

And to Doctor

THOMAS WHARTON

SAMUEL ROLLS

Dedicateth the insuing Contemplations, with profession of his great respects, and in thankful acknowledgment of all the undeserved favours he hath received from them.

To his Highly Honoured Friends

SAMUEL ROLLS

Dedicateth the inlarging Contempla-

Phyſicall Contemplations of the Nature, and Natural Cauſes of FIRE.

CONTEMPLATION I.

Concerning the Nature of Fire, and the uſe that may be made of that Contemplation.

IT much increaſeth my wonder at the great things done by Fire, when I ſeriouſly conſider what Fire is, I had almoſt ſaid what a petty thing it is. I could ſcarce believe it at the firſt, but am now convinced, paſt all doubt, that Fire is nothing but a mighty ſwarm, and torrent of ſulphurious particles, or motes of brimſtone, violently agitated or moved, and forcibly breaking out from thoſe reſpective bodies, to which they did formerly belong.

That Fire is a meer ſtream of ſmall particles, motes, or atomes, methinks the ſtrange vaniſhing of ſo much of every thing, as did turn to Fire, as it were into aire or ſmoke, (or we know not what our ſelves) doth prove ſufficiently. Though there be ſome remainder of all or moſt things that are burnt, (as namely aſhes, &c.) yet a great part of each body ſo deſtroyed is miſſing,

missing, flies away imperceptibly, (that is, we see nothing of what it was before) and we can but guess (at most) what is become of it. Bodies of bulk and weight, and yet not very much neither, though they may ascend for the present upon the wings of others, as bars of Iron blown up with Gun-powder, yet down they come again, and having got rid of that mantle, either of smoke or fire, in which they mounted up, come under our view again; so do the salt and Earthy parts of most bodies, which we call by the name of ashes. What small things are ashes! and yet too heavy alwaies to keep aloft, & pressed down to the Earth with that little weight they have, which is next to none: (take them singlely and one by one) Surely then those flaming bodies which keep their station above, and never return to us again, (as we can discern) which fly up to the Element of Fire, (if such a notion may be admitted) and there abide, (as Rivers run into the Sea) they must be exceeding light, and weightless, and consequently as exile, and small as can be imagined. For matter (as Fire doubtless is) cannot but be ponderous, if there be any quantity of it together. Were several motes, such as we see in the aire joyned together, they could not flote and swim as they do, in that thin vehicle, but would quickly sink to the ground, much less were they able to fly up to heaven, (as if they had Eagles wings) as we observe fire to do.

Sith then it is cleat to us, that Fire is nothing else but a mighty stream of atomes (which we shall prove anon to be sulphurious) O my soul, apply this ere thou proceed any further. Surely this

this notion hath its use. I see the great God can terrify the World, yea and destroy it too, with any thing, yea with that which is next to nothing. 2 *Pet.* 3. 7. *But the Heavens and the Earth which are now, are kept in store, reserved unto fire, against the day of judgment, vers.* 10. *The Elements shall melt with fervent heat, the Earth also and the workes that are therein, shall be burnt up.* I cease to wonder at God his making Locusts, yea flies, yea lice, so great a Plague to *Pharaoh*, and to the *Egyptians*, that *Pharaoh* himself began to relent, whilst those Plagues were upon him. Those Creatures were Giants (if I may so speak) in comparison of those motes of brimstone, which the great God imployed to destroy our City, and shall be his only Executioners at last in the destruction of the whole World, as I proved but now. How many parts do belong to each flie, or flea? (For even all their parts were down in Gods Book) head, eyes, eares, legs, intrails, and now each of these parts (and for ought I know, count bones, and all, they may be some scores of them) are I presume as big or bigger than any one of those sulphurious Atomes, or Motes of which Fire consists. A man would scarce believe till he had well considered it, that swarmes of Locusts, Canker-wormes, Cater-pillars, and Palmer-wormes, commissioned by God to introduce a Famine, should be all that God intends by those amazing expressions, which he is pleased to use in *Joel.* 2. from verse 1, to the 11. *Let all the Inhabitants of the Land tremble, for the day of the Lord cometh, &c. vers.* 1, *and vers.* 2. *A great people and a strong, there hath not been ever the like, nor shall be any more after it, to many Generations,*

vers.

verſ. 3. *The Land is as the Garden of Eden before them, and behind them a deſolate Wilderneſs; yea, and nothing ſhall eſcape them. The appearance of them is as horſes, and as horſ-men, ſo they ſhall run.* Read to the end of the eleventh verſe. Dreadful expreſſions, yet were all verified in an Army of Locuſts, and ſuch like deſpicable inſects, by which God did ſuch execution upon them, as did demonſtrate thoſe expreſſions, not to have been ſo ſtrange as true, yea to have been no hyperbolies. *Joel* 1. 4.

Now, how eaſie is it for us to believe this might be ſo, who have ſeen the great God working wonderfull deſolations by far weaker inſtruments, *viz.* by an army of little motes of brimſtone, all in an uproare, and joint conſpiracy, to take their flight from thoſe bodies, in and with which they lately dwelt in a profitable peace, and Amity. *Goliah* in proportion did not more exceed *David* in ſtrength and ſtature, and dimenſions every way, than Locuſts, and ſuch like inſects do exceed thoſe little Atomes, whereof Fire conſiſts. Beſides thoſe inſects are living creatures (which is a great matter) but the ſulphurious particles I am ſpeaking of (otherwiſe called fire) are (as we all know) things without life, and yet ſo nimble when God ſets them on, as if they had vigorous ſouls to actuate them; or rather, as if they themſelves were all ſoul, and ſpirit, which are indeed ſome of the contemptibleſt ſhreds, or rather filings of meer matter. I ſee then that the great God can make a formidable Army of any thing, (even of the duſt of the earth, for why not of that, as well as of theſe?) I have therefore done

wondring that such things should be spoken of Locusts, and such like insects as are in *Joel* 2,11. *The Lord shall utter his voice before his Army, for his Camp is very great.* The words that follow in the same verse, are a sufficient Comment, *For he is strong that executeth his word.* Surely they do their work in his strength, whose glory it is to make weak things confound the mighty, and things that are not, bring to naught things that are.

I further learn from hence, the great danger of an enraged multitude, though every one of that number singly, and by himself considered, be very mean and despicable: yet all put together, may be terrible as an Army with Banners. The Psalmist seems to speak of the tumult of the people, as if it were so hard to still and pacifie, as the very raging of the Sea. *Psal.* 65.7. *Which stilleth the noise of the seas, and the tumults of the people.* Multitudes of people are compared to great Waters, or Inundations, and they as well as Fire it self (though each single person is but as one poor drop) will bear down all before them. It is God-like to still the Tumults of the people; but to raise tempests and commotions amongst them, as *Jonas* did upon the Sea, is neither the part of a Christian, nor of a wise man? Who would conjure up those spirits which possibly he shall never be able to lay again? Oh the strength of weak things united and combined by whole millions together! oh the greatness of little things met in such infinite swarms; what vast things are the Sands of the Sea-shore, take them together? What huge mountains do they make? and how do they give Law to the Sea its self, and say to it under God, hitherto

ſhalt thou go and no further? *Jer.*5.22. *Fear ye not me, ſaith the Lord, which have placed the ſands for the bounds of the Sea, that it cannot paſs it, and though the waves thereof toſs themſelves, yet can they not prevaile; though they roar, yet can they not paſs over.* Yea, what ſmaller and more deſpicable thing, than each of thoſe by its ſelf conſidered? They have more paſſion than pollicy that ſtick not to inrage the body of a Nation, without a juſt and enforcing cauſe, though to humour them in every thing (any more than children) is not commendable, or convenient. What goodly ſhips have ſtuck faſt in thoſe heaps of duſt, called ſands? ſo as they could never get off again, yea been ſwallowed up by them? as *Jonas* was by the Whale, or *Corah* and his complices by the earth, when it opened its mouth upon them? ſo that no diſcreet pilot ventures to come neer them, or offers to ſay what hurt can ſo ſtrong and ſtately a veſſel, receive from thoſe ſands, which are but a heap of duſt, thouſands of which run thorough a little pin-hole in an hour-glaſs in the ſpace of one hour? If an Ocean of Atomes did (as we know to our coſt) bring greater and ſpeedier ruine, on our famous City than an hoaſt of men could have done (for that they much exceeded any army in number, though their power ſingly were next to nothing.) If ſo, I ſay, it appeareth, that vaſt and innumerable multitudes (at leaſtwiſe of people though of the weaker and more deſpicable ſort) ought not to be had in contempt, or to be needleſſy put into a combuſtion. Alas, were it not that God had put a divine ſtamp upon Magiſtrates (as he hath been pleaſed to call them

them Gods) ſurely they could no more rule the people, when in the calmeſt temper that ever they are in (ſome being alwaies too rough) then they could rule the Sea. What wiſdom can it then be to put ſo unruly a body into a groundleſs commotion? If this Sea once become troubled, work, and rage, and foam, and ſwell, how much is it to be feared it may overflow all its banks, and invade us with a ruining inundation? It was not cowardize, but prudence in *Herod*, to decline putting of *John* to death, for fear of the people, becauſe they accounted him a Prophet, *Matth.* 14. 15. Likewiſe in the chief Prieſts and Elders of the people, not to reply unto Chriſt, that the Baptiſm of *John* was of men, becauſe of the people, who all held him as a Prophet, *Matth.* 21. 26. For my own part, I dread the Inſurrection of people, no leſs than the conſequences of Fire it ſelf, the beginnings whereof have appeared very contemptible, ſo that it hath been ſaid, (as is reported) that ſuch a fire as that was at the firſt, might be piſſed out; but the concluſion fatal, beyond all imagination.

Now do I long to be at the end of this Meditation, but having promiſed to ſhew what the matter of thoſe particles is whereof Fire conſiſts, and conſidering with my ſelf that ſome good morall may be gathered and infer'd from thence, as I have already hinted, that ſulphurious or oily particles are thoſe whereof Fire doth altogether or moſtly conſiſt: ſo I ſhall now undertake to prove that ſo it is, and conſider how we may improve it. It is manifeſt that all mixt bodies here below are compounded of five Elements, or principles, *viz.* Spirit,

(otherwiſe called *Mercury*) Water, (or Phlegme) Sulphur, (or an Oily kind of ſubſtance) Salt and Earth. For each natural body, be it of vegitables, Animals, or Minerals, is by chymical art reduced or reſolved into theſe five. From any ſuch bodie may be drawn a ſpirit, or generous ſubtile liquor; an Oile, a Water, a Salt, and a kind of Earth; ſaving that the two laſt are rather ſaid to ſtay behind, than to be drawn. Now if each body that is burning, be as it is, both its own fire and its own fuell, both that which burns and that which is burnt, then one or more of the fore-mentioned principles ſo modified, muſt be the matter and form of fire. As for the Watery and Phlegmatick part of each body, no man will ſo confound two Elements ſo contrary each to other, as to ſay that is the Fire which conſumes. Then as for that Salt and Earth which belongs to bodies, they are not the Fire that burns them up, for that which burns ſo far forth conſumes and flies away, but Salt and Earth they remain after the greateſt burnings, under the form of Aſhes. True it is, that ſpirit or ſpiritous Liquor which is in Bodies, is capable of taking Fire; as we ſee ſpirit of Wine will burn, and Feavers ariſe in the bodies of men by vertue of their ſpirits being inflamed; but then we muſt conſider, that there is but little of that which is called Spirit, or Spirits, in Timber, and ſuch like materials of houſes, as are deſtroyed by Fire; neither is the Fire of any great duration which hath only Spirits for its fuell; as we ſee in the bodies of men, that thoſe Feavers which only fire the Spirits, never laſt above three or four daies, and

many

many times not above one day; and are therefore called Ephemeral.

Having therefore quitted Water, Salt, and Earth, from being the cauſes of Fire; and alſo proved that the Spirits of ſuch kind of bodies which have but little of Spirits in them, cannot contribute much to the maintenance of a deſolating Fire; Sulphur, or the oyly part of each body will appear to be the great Incendiary, and to be more the matter, fuell, and fomenter of Fire than any thing elſe. And that it is ſo, doth yet further appear, in that ſuch bodies of all others, are moſt apt to take Fire, and to burn fiercely when they have ſo done, in which there is moſt of a ſulphurious or oily ſubſtance, as Oile it ſelf, Pitch, Tarre, &c. Moreover, we ſee that when any body is thoroughly burnt, the ſulphurious parts are all or moſt of them gone (as if conſcious of what they had done, they had fled for it) and which is moſt of all demonſtrative, when thoſe parts are once gone, all or moſt of them, what remains will burn no longer; as you ſee, we cannot make a fire with Aſhes, for that they conſiſt only of Salt and Earth, with little or no commixture of Sulphur.

Sith then Sulphur or Brimſtone (though in an acceptation ſomewhat different from that which in commonly called by that name) is the great matter of Fire, and the Agitation, Commotion and Flight of it, is the very Form of Fire. I ſhall the leſs wonder hereafter to finde the Scripture ſtill joyning Brimſtone and Fire together. So *Gen.* 19,24. *The Lord rained upon Sodom Brimſtone and Fire. Pſal.* 11. 6. *On the wicked he ſhall*

rain Fire and Brimstone. And *Isa.* 30.33. *The Pile whereof is Fire & much Wood, The breath of the Lord like a stream of Brimstone kindleth it, viz. Tophet.* Fire most usually kindleth Fire. A stream of Brimstone in violent motion is Fire, and here you see the *breath of the Lord, is said, like a mighty stream of Brimstone, to kindle Tophet*; which kinde of expression is more genuine and philosophical than most men know it to be, and may hint unto us, that thorough our ignorance it comes to pass that many expressions in Scripture seem to us no more proper and significant than they do, it faring with us in the reading of holy Writ, as with those that ignorantly walk or ride over precious Mines, little do they think what a world of Treasure they tread upon; nor if they did, could they be content till they had gotten within the bowels of that ground which now they slightly trample upon. But I have been too long in this Philosophical contemplation (because it was such) and must endeavour to compensate my prolixity in this with greater Brevity in the rest, at leastwise of that sort, if any such shall occur.

CONTEMPLATION II.

Touching the Nature of Sulphur, which is the principal matter and cause of Fire, and how it comes to be so mischievous in the World.

BEing credibly informed that the Element called Sulphur, hath had the greatest hand under God in the late dismal Fire (as it hath had

had in all other, whereby Towns and Cities have been laid waſte) it is but fit we ſhould take him under ſerious examination, and ſtrictly enquire what he is, & by what waies and means he brings ſuch great deſolations to paſs. Sulphur, that is, Brimſtone ſo called by Chymiſts, becauſe it hath ſome affinity with that which we commonly call Brimſtone, though it be not the very ſame (for our common Brimſtone is a compounded body, ſo is not that we treat of) is one of thoſe Elements or principles with which all terreſtrial bodies are made up, and whereof they conſiſt.

It hath pleaſed the God of nature, who is called *Natura naturans*, that amongſt all things here below, even thoſe which go by the name of Elements, as Air, and Water, and Earth, there ſhould be no one pure and unmixed, and which is more ſtrange, that the principles of which each body is compounded, ſhould be of different and contrary natures, *viz.* hot & cold, moiſt and dry, heavy and light, active and unactive, weak and ſtrong. Yea, that contrariety which is betwixt thoſe Elements of Fire and Water, Earth and Air, which are the Ingredients of each Sublunary, makes for the good of each, and for the benefit of the whole, ſo long as they quietly draw together in that yoak of mixture in which God hath placed them. So that as the Apoſtle ſpeaks in another caſe, 1 *Cor.* 12. 21. *The eye cannot ſay to the hand, I have no need of thee; nor the head to the feet, I have no need of you.* Fire cannot ſay to Water, or Water to Fire, or either of them to Earth, I have no need of you. Though ſome of them do curb and limit the Activity

of others; yea, the more ignoble put some restraint upon those that are more noble than themselves; yet in all this they do but what is necessary for the well-being, if not also for the very being of the *compositum*. *Mercury* and Sulphur would be too volatile and apt to vanish, if Earth and water did not hold them in: Water and Earth would be too dull and sluggish, if Sulphur and Mercury did not put life into them. Elements are said to abide in mixtion refractly, that is, brokenly, not one of them being able so fully to execute its own pleasure, and inclination, as it might, if it were all alone; and it is best it should be so, for if one of them get an absolute unlimited power, and make vassals of all the rest, presently all goes to wrack. So in acute Feavers, when either the spirits are too high, or the sulphurious part of the blood; and so in chronical Feavers or Agues, when salt is become too predominant in the blood, and hath sowred it (like Ale in Summer) you see what work it makes, how it threatens no less than death and dissolution. Yet give me leave to say, though no one Element have unlimited power where there is a due mixtion, yet neither is Anarchy or Ataxy to be found in mixt bodies, no not in vegetables, which have the lowest degree of life; nor yet in minerals, which have none. For some one Element is still predominant over all the rest: hence amongst men, some are counted sanguine, others phlegmatick, &c. there being no where found in bodies that, which is called, *Temperamentum ad pondus*, that is, just so much fire as water, and air as earth, weight for weight, (as if Nature were a Levelker) but *temperamentum*

to

mentum ad juſtitiam; as in a Medicine, in which are ſcruples of gentle purgers, to a few grains of thoſe that are ſtronger, and in each a baſis which is ſupreme over all things in the medicine; yet not put without its correctives, leſt it ſhould work too violently. You will ſee anon whether all this tends, I ſaid before, that ſulphur is one Element or Ingredient of all terreſtrial bodies, and now I ſhall add, that it is one of the moſt active, noble, and uſeful amongſt them all. If that which is called the Spirit or mercurial part, do excell the ſulphur, as it is ſaid to do, yet doth ſulphur as much excel the other three Principles, *viz.* Salt, Water, and Earth; ſo long as it remains in a convenient mixture and dwels peaceably with all the reſt. It were eaſie to expatiate in the commendation of Sulphur, ſo placed and qualified as God hath originally placed and qualified it in and with other Elements. Sulphur (ſay Chymiſts, and truly) is as it were the warm boſom in which the ſpirituous parts of all bodies do lodge, the bond of union, or *copula* betwixt ſpirits, and more groſs ſubſtances (as Cartilages or griſtles are betwixt hard bones and more tender parts.) It is that to which moſt bodies do chiefly owe their acceptable colour, taſte, ſent, and amiable texture. From thence moſt vegetables do derive their maturity, ſweetneſs, and moſt other perfective qualities. It doth ſuch ſervice in bodies as nothing doth more: namely, it curbs the ſharpneſs of that ſalt which is in them, it blunts the acrimony of the ſpirits, by its ſupple oily quality, it cements and ſodres other elements, which otherwiſe would never hold together;

being

being somewhat glutinous, it contributes to the consistence of bodies, which would be otherwise over fluid and volatile; in a word, it hath a faculty of resisting putrefaction more than any thing else, in so much that by means thereof Ale may be kept from sowring in the midst of Summer, and Juices of Plants from corrupting. All this and much more may be truly affirmed of Sulphur whilst it keepes its proper place and station.

But when this noble and useful Element once becomes impatient of the Yoak of mixtion with other Elements, and will no longer indure that water should allay it. Salt should fix it, Earth should clog and retard it, nor yet that the spirits though more excellent than its self, should govern it, then doth it play the maddest pranks imaginable; it breaks away from those other Elements that were joined with it, like an unruly servant from his Master, that flings open the doors, that who will may come out or go in, leaves all exposed to rapine and spoile, and not content with that, musters together all the debauched youth, (such as himself) that he can come neer, drawes them away from their respective Masters, and engageth them in the same Rebellion with himself, and by this meanes it not only ruines all that society, whereof it was before a profitable member, and those which it hath drawn into the same conspiracy, but its self also. For it can no more subsist without those Elements which it hath cast off, than they can subsist without it, and so it quickly vanisheth and comes to nothing. I say not only the Elements which are left behinde do moulder and

crumble

crumble to duſt and aſhes, but by that meanes its ſelf is quickly almoſt annihilated, which is far worſe.

Now methinks there ſhould be ſome morality if not Divinity alſo, to be learned from this diſcourſe of ſulphur, which if I had deſpaired of, I would never have dived ſo far into it. How naturally then do the following conſiderations offer themſelves from what hath been diſcourſed as touching ſulphur, *viz.* In the firſt place, how uſeful many men of ſulphurious tempers that is active, ſubtle and vigorous; might be, could they but skill of it to be contented and peaceable? but on the other hand, how dangerous all ſuch perſons are, even above others, when once tranſported with pride or paſſion, affectation of undue liberty, or unlimitted dominion? Then do they verify that ſaying, *Corruptio optimi eſt peſſima.* The beſt things when depraved, become the worſt of all. An Apoſtate Arch-angel is moſt likely to make a Belzebub or Prince of Devils. No Element more perfective of bodies, than ſulphur duly bounded, but otherwiſe none ſo deſtructive.

Moreover, how great an embleme is ſulphur of thoſe men and of their miſery, who have not the wiſdome to know when they are well? who want for nothing, and yet cannot be content. Such men whilſt they graſp at more, uſually loſe what they had, like our firſt parents, who affecting to be as God, knowing good and evil, (when they knew enough already) became like the bruittes that periſh, or as Lucifer, (if that be meant of the Devil) who ſaying he would aſcend, and be like the moſt high, *aut Deus aut*

nullus

nullus, as he ſaid, *aut Cæſar aut nullus*, was caſt down to hell.

Sulphur is in point of power and dignity the ſecond Element in each body, yet oft times that ſatisfieth it not, but it would have the Throne, which belongeth to the things called ſpirits, and then *Icarus*-like, by ſoaring ſo high, it melts its waxen wings, and falls down into almoſt nothing.

I further obſerve how ſulphur, whilſt it deſtroyes other things, deſtroyes its ſelf, ſo many men, whilſt *Sampſon*-like they go about to deſtroy the *Philiſtines*, (as they count them) pluck the houſe (as he did) upon their own heads. Such as are ever biting and devouring others, are like by others to be bitten and devoured. (*Gal.* 5. 15.) The ſad experience we have had in that kind, may ſave me the labour of reflecting yet further, from the nature of Sulphur, upon the danger of an inteſtine War, when one part of the ſame body fights with another, or with all the reſt. Sulphur is a part of thoſe bodies which it preyes upon; and what doth it get by it? it ruines the fabrick it did belong to, and its ſelf to boot, yea ſome parts of the body, after it hath done its worſt, do ſtill remain, when its ſelf is utterly extinct, and no more to be ſeen.

Moreover I obſerve that ſulphur goes about to deſtroy that order, which God hath placed in the World, *viz.* That Elements of a different nature, ſhould cohabit and dwell together in peace and concord, (which may be done) for ſo it fareth in moſt things in the World. Sulphur would make a ſchiſme and a rent, as not enduring to have its exceſſes corrected, (as it is needful they

they ſhould be) therefore it fancieth to dwel alone; ſues out a divorce, and puts aſunder the things which God had joyned together, and what comes thereof? Doth it not periſh in the doing of it? I am deceived if men of ſo proud a temper, that they can brook no allay of their exceſſes (which are things incident to moſt men, both in opinion and practice) by a commixture of ſuch Elements, as they might ſafely cohabit with, (yea and be happy, though not perfectly humoured in a conjunction with them) do not at length gain as little by it, as enraged Sulphur doth when it flies from the reſt of thoſe Elements, to which it was formerly united, and ſoon after dies, like a woman that will needs live from her husband, and ſo ſtarves for want of Alimony. Men of that principle and practice, go about to diſſolve the world, at leaſtwiſe take that courſe that would do it, if followed in all things. For when the great God ſhall aſſign to each Element its proper and diſtinct place, by it ſelf, (in caſe he annihilate them not) which no inſtrument is more fit to effect than Fire,) then will the whole world be at an end.

CONTEMPLATION III.

Concerning the true cauſe of Combuſtibility, or what it is that doth make Bodies obnoxious to Fire: together with the improvement of that conſideration.

IT is the Fire that is within each Terreſtrial body, which alone expoſeth it to that Fire which

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is without. It is a moſt true ſaying, that Fire is potentially in almoſt all bodies, but actually in very few; the meaning is, there is that in moſt bodies which can eaſily become fire, yea which is actually fire, *quoad actum primum*, and differs no more from true fire, than the ſame man when he is quiet, differs from himſelf when he is in a rage or paſſion, which he may be eaſily put into. Were it not for that fire that is within its ſelf, nothing could be burnt: for fire doth all its execution upon other things, by means of that confederacy and conſpiracy which it hath with thoſe ſulphurious particles which it findes in thoſe bodies which are inkindled by it, opening as it were the priſon-doors for them, knocking off their fetters, reſcuing them from their keepers, I mean thoſe contrary Elements whereby they were reſtrained before, and kept aſunder, and then giving them opportunity to unite together, and with joynt force violently to break away, and to deſtroy thoſe bodies which before they did help to preſerve.

How great cauſe have we then to wonder that almoſt the whole creation is not in a flame, ſith moſt creatures carry fire as it were in their boſoms continually, at leaſtwiſe are as tinder, which a few ſparks falling upon, are able to turn into fire? It is no marvel to ſee thoſe things deſtroyed which do alwaies bear about them the inſtruments and principles of their own deſtruction, as one that did alwaies go up and down with his pockets full of looſe Gun-powder. In a like ſenſe as St. *John* ſaith, *All that is in the world, is the luſt of the fleſh, or the luſt of the*

the eye; meaning as fuel ready for thoſe luſts to kindle upon, and propagate its ſelf by, may it be ſaid that all or moſt things of the World are Fire, as to ſome part of them, that is, as fuell for fire to work upon, and to convert into its own nature.

May not this notion of creatures, being conſumed by their own internal fire, put us in mind how that mans deſtruction alſo is of himſelf, and that our greateſt enemies as Chriſt ſaith, are thoſe of our own houſe. The fire of temptation from without us could do us no great hurt, were it not for the fire of ſin within us conſenting and conſpiring therewith. For every man is then only tempted, that is overcome by temptation, when he is inticed and drawn away of his own luſts. It is ſaid of Chriſt that *the Devill came and found nothing in him*. Thereupon it was that the fiery darts which he threw at Chriſt, were preſently quenched and took no effect, neither could they upon us, if there were nothing in us to comply with them. Woe unto us that we are traytors to our ſelves, and do naturally combine with our greateſt enemies to accompliſh our own ruine.

But as thoſe bodies are leaſt incident to fire, in which there is moſt of water, ſalt, or earth, to rebate the petulancy of ſulphur, ſo are thoſe ſoules leſt obnoxious to the injuries of temptation that have the moſt grace; which in ſcripture is compared ſometimes to water, and other times to ſalt, let your words be ſeaſoned with ſalt, that is, with grace.

Seeing then in this life more or leſs of ſin will alwayes cleave to us, as ſo much ſulphur ready

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to ſet us on fire; labour we to weaken the power of it, by the predominancy of grace, ſo ſhall the remainder of our very ſins in ſome ſenſe, contribute to our good (as ſulphur to the good of thoſe bodies it is mixed with) as tending to keep us from pride, ſecurity, ſelf-confidence, truſt in our own righteouſneſs, and ſuch like evils, to weaken in us the ſalt ſharp humour of cenſuring others to make our ſpirits more ſerious and conſiſtent by the ſhame and grief which they occaſion in us: ſo ſhall we improve them as vipers in treacle, which ſo mixed, make it the better antidote, and that which was as down-right fire in the commiſſion of it, ſhall become as profitable ſulphur in our reflection upon it, and accommodating of it to the forementioned uſes and purpoſes.

CONTEMPLATION IV.

Of Fire kindled by Fire.

THe moſt uſual way of kindling fire, as we all know, is by fire, one fire begets another. That which is actually fire, makes actual fire of that which before was but potentially, or rather habitually ſuch. The reaſon is plainly this, things of the ſame kinde do naturally reſort one to another, and conſort each with other, as we ſay proverbially, that *Birds of a feather flock together*, and fire hath a name above all other things for congregating, or calling together things that are homogeneous, or of the ſame nature, as alſo for ſegregating or ſeparating things that are heterogeneous or of a different kinde

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(in ſo much that that was made the very definition of fire by them that knew no better) Now actual Fire, when it hath once ſeparated the ſulphurious particles of other bodies, from thoſe more quiet Elements, which did reſtrain them, whilſt mixed therwith; and when it hath brought thoſe wilde Atomes together, which before were conveniently diſperſed and diſ-joyned each from other, the product is this; that each of theſe being habitually fire, (as flints are, out of which fire may be ſtruck) what with the irritation they receive from actual fire, and what with that greater ſtrength they have acquired, by being united in ſuch great multitudes, preſently they begin to kindle and ſhow themſelves in actual fire, and as it were, to brandiſh their glittering ſwords, which before they kept as it were in ſcabbards, as by way of triumph, that they had now caſt off the yoak of mixtion, with diſcenting and reſtraining Elements, and poſſeſt themſelves of that liberty which they were alwayes deſirous of, but could not ſooner attain.

Here me thinks, I ſee a lively embleme of ungodly youth, ſome are actually ſo, others are ſo but habitually, as being under reſtraint from Parents, Maſters, and other Governors, who do all that in them lies to keep thoſe fiery mettal-ſome youths from conſorting each with other, leſt by that meanes they ſhould inflame each other: (as beames of the Sun concentered in a burning glaſs, are able to kindle fire, which ſcattered and diſperſed they could never do.) Now when ſome or more of theſe young men or maides, actually wicked and debaucht, as having already caſt off the yoak of all government,

and run away from those that did and should restrain them; either openly or secretly, lights into the company of those that are habitually such as themselves, and have great propensions to the same things: first he tempts and inticeth them away from under the jurisdiction and society of those that have hitherto restrained them (as to their lusts,) then he joynes them to as great a number as he can, of such young ranters as themselves, who mutually encourage one another in an evil way, and strengthen the hand each of other, to do that in heards and troops, which they would dread to do singly, and one by one, and when it is come to that, then doth the wickedness which heretofore they smothered, flame out; they are presently all on a light fire, and so continue (if God extinguish it not) till having utterly consumed themselves by sin, they come to just nothing, or what is worse than nothing; as that which we call *Fire*, domineers a while, and carries all before it, but by and by it vanisheth, and we know no more of it (save that it oft-times leaves an ugly stink behind it.) To give this fair warning to young men and women, ready to be debauched by the next ill company, is all the use I shall make of that most known way of kindling fire, which is by fire its self, where the allegory you see holds in every thing, and improves a truth to our hands, which might seem not worth our taking notice of, because every foole knowes it. To which I shall add but thus much, though fooles can apprehend it, yet can they not apply it, at leastwise to their own good, and he that can do so is no fool.

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CONTEMPLATION V.

Of Fire kindled by Putrefaction.

THey ſay that fire is ſometimes kindled by means of Putrefaction, & it ſeems evident from experiments, both without and within our ſelves, that ſo it is. What are Feavers, but as it were ſo many fires kindled in the bodies of men? Elſe how do they make the blood to boile in our veines, and ſo exceedingly rarifie, it that the veſſels are painfully diſtended by it, and are ſcarce able to contain it? or how come they to make ſuch a heap of aſhes in the body, as appeareth to be made by that deep ſediment that is in the urine when the diſeaſe begins to decline, or (as it is vulgarly called) to break away? Theſe hints may ſufficiently prove that Feavers are Internal fires; and whence are moſt of thoſe fires (at leaſtwiſe that are of any long continuance) but from Putrefaction, and thence called Putrid Feavers? Now as for Corruption or Putrefaction, it is thus defined, *viz.* that it is the ſeparation of thoſe parts and principles which were before mutually combined (the band of their union being diſſolved) or that it is the diſſolution of, or reſolution of a compounded body, into all or moſt of thoſe principles or elements of which it was compounded, ſome taking their flight one way, and ſome another. Now this ſeparation or divorce of the principles of bodies one from another, contributeth to the inkindling fire by this means, *viz.* becauſe when the ſulphurous particles get looſe

from the reſt, then do they combine together, and break away with great heat and violence from thoſe leſs active Elements, to which they were joyned before, and thence comes Fire. Thus in putrid Feavers, the due mixture and compoſition of the blood is very much deſtroyed, the thicker and thinner parts affecting as it were to be each by themſelves (like the whey and curds in milk, that is ſowred or turned) which were before perfectly united. Then the ſulphurious or oily part of the blood, thus ſet at liberty, flies thorough the body with great violence and ſets all into a combuſtion. And this is the great inſtance, as from within our ſelves, of Fire ariſing from Putrefaction. As for an experiment from without, one may ſuffice, *viz.* that of Dung, which lying together in heaps, and ſo putrifying more and more, doth ſometimes wax ſo hot, that it ſets fire on the ſtraw that is mingled with it: which is long of its ſulphurious parts by putrefaction, ſet at liberty, and flying away in great troops, and with much violence.

And is there nothing to be made of all this beſides matter of Speculation? You know what corruption and putrefaction doth ſignifie in a moral ſenſe; and ſure I am that kind of corruption is the cauſe of all the miſchievous fires that are in the world. Did God drown the old world, becauſe all fleſh had corrupted its ſelf? and did he not burn *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* for the ſame cauſe? So likewiſe *Jeruſalem*, *Jer.* 9. *v.* 13. The Scripture calls ſinful communication σαπρὸς, that is, rotten or putrified, *Eph.* 4. 29. and ſaith of it, that it doth φθείρειν, that is, corrupt

corrupt or putrifie good manners. Many fires are kindled by such communication, *viz.* fires of lust, and fires of anger, and of revenge, besides those fires of judgment and vengeance which God sends upon the world for the same. *James* 3. 6. *The tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity, and setteth on fire the course of nature, and is set on fire of Hell.*

Moreover, if we take the word putrefaction strictly for a secession or separation of principles or elements formerly united, in that acception it is capable of a good moral, and may serve to teach us how great the danger of perfect separation and disunion is, even amongst those whose principles do so far forth disagree that they cannot be together, but refractly, as fire and water in mixtion: Yet these in natural bodies, as contrary as they seem, do much better in a convenient mixture and composition, than they ever can singly and apart: yea when they fall in pieces, though one bear a greater sway for the present than before, and that the worthiest of all the rest (as it might be the spirits in Ephemeral Feavers) yet as well that part which rules more absolutely than ever for the time being, as those parts which are more than ever subjected to it, is quickly destroyed and brought to nothing.

Natural bodies cannot be mistaken about their own party (which are really such) but by a kinde of infallible instinct, do draw those parts out of other bodies, which are for kinde the same with themselves, as the kindled sulphur that is in one body, kindles and drawes forth that sulphur which is in another, and yet it

proves unhappy and fatal to those bodies (as to sulphur in particular) that they divide from all others, and will unite only amongst themselves, though they are all perfectly of the same species, and no more than just numerically differenced. How it should be more safe for men to do the same thing, *viz.* to abstract and divorce themselves from all, but those that are of their perswasion, whilst mean time divers may be such, only in pretence, and for their own ends for ought they know, and others whom they reject may heartily symbolize with them in more things; I say, how that can be prudent or safe, I am yet to learn.

Those that affect that simplicity which is peculiar to God, and his alone prerogative, let them conceive a displeasure against the composition of their own bodies, and try conclusions to make them consist but of one Element, and that the noblest of all. Let them quartel four of those five principles which are the ingredients of our bodies, and resolve to turn sulphur, salt, Earth and Water out of doors, and that they will consist of meer spirits, and to that end let them exalt those spirituous liquors that are in them, to the greatest height that may be, that so they may be able to turn those four inferiour principles out of possession, and live alone in and throughout the whole body, all the veines and arteries being henceforth filled with spirits only in stead of blood: Try how this experiment will succeed. If it do well, attempt the like thing upon the Church and State, bring them to the same pass. But if you finde this likely to set on fire the whole course of nature, to set you in a violent

feaver

ſeaver that will ſoon burn you to death, be ſo juſt as not to wiſh that ſhould be done to others that you would by no meanes have done to your ſelves; and ſuſpect that may be bad for publick bodies, which would be ſo deſtructive to your own private. Let one principle bear rule over all the reſt, (as in good Wines the ſpirituous parts are predominant) and let the nobleſt Element ſway the Scepter, elſe things will degenerate: (as Wines do into Vinegar, when the ſpirits are kept under, and the ſaline or ſaltiſh particles exalted:) but let the leſs noble Elements not be excluded, but fairly comprehended in a due mixtion and ſubordination, otherwiſe if it fare with men(as it doth with fire) that which aſpires to be all in all, will ſoon vaniſh, and be as it were annihilated.

CONTEMPLATION VI.

Of Fire kindled by the colliſion of two hard bodies.

AS obvious almoſt as any of the former, is the way of kindling fire by the colliſion or ſmiting together of two hard bodies, as when flint & ſteel are ſtruck one againſt the other: the reaſon why fire iſſues from thence, is, becauſe by the blow given, the ſulphurious particles of the ſteel and flint are put in motion. Now inward they cannot move, becauſe theſe bodies being hard and of cloſe parts, do ſuffer nothing to get within them, for as much as there can be no penetrating of dimenſions. Therefore out they muſt come, and if they could come out leiſurely

and by degrees, they would produce no fire, or ſcarce ſo much as heat, but ſallying forth in great haſte, and all at once, as if they were affrighted with the blow they had received, by virtue of their number, union, and violent motion, they ingender ſparks, & produce that fire which we diſcern to come from them.

Juſt thus it is betwixt perſons of ſtout and ſturdy ſpirits, when they happen to claſh one againſt another, retreat and retire into themſelves they cannot, to deliberate, and conſider what they had beſt to do; ſo full are they of themſelves, that is, of their pride and paſſion, but out they come, being once put into a commotion, and with all the ſpirits they can make & muſter together, aſſaile each other, and with their drawn glittering ſwords, do as it were fire at one another, and with greateſt eagerneſs purſue a bloody duell.

Now oh the folly of men, Do they not know that the conteſts and incounters of two great ſpirits, is as like to produce ſuch a bloody iſſue as the ſmiting of flint and ſteel together, is to bring out Fire, and yet they will give way to it upon every ſlight occaſion, as if they had leſs conſideration than the devil himſelf, who ſaid, skin for skin, and all that a man hath will he give for his life: but they will give or throw away their lives upon every trifling provocation, as if they were nothing worth. I wonder who it is that doth ſo highly honour the memory of men dying upon thoſe termes, that perſons of quality ſhould be ambitious of it?

I wonder in whoſe Kallender it is, that ſuch kinde of perſons are put down for Martyrs, Saints and

and Worthy-men! I wonder what heathen God it is, whom men think to please with such kinde of sacrifices (for the true God doth most certainly abhor them) I wonder that men who stand so much upon the nobleness of their blood (as if each drop of theirs were more worth than all that runs in the veins of ordinary men) should trivially pour it out, or hazard it to be poured out, like water upon the ground, and at the same time everlastingly taint it, by sheding the blood of others, either actually or intentionally. Surely *Cain* and *Lamech*, and these men deserve to be canonized all in one day, at leastwise it is very fit that all their names should be written in red characters, that is, in letters of blood.

But what shall we say to those persons, who make it their business to knock those flints and steels against each other, and then to finde tinder to receive the sparks, and matches to procure the flame, (that tinder of its self could not) that is, to set persons of great and sturdy spirits together by the eares to foment their differences, and to make them thirsty after one anothers blood. If that rule in Law be true, *Plus peccat Author quam Actor.* If any such two shall happen to kill one another in a duel, or so, they will be murtherers, but you will be greater murtherers than they.

I can scarcely think of two hard bodies by their mutual attrition fetching fire out of each other, and not meditate that thus it is when two Nations fall at oddes, they are alwayes firing one at another, and the reason is, because they are hard bodies, and neither can yield, (one cannot yield in point of right, nor the other in point of honour) and so those sparkes are continually struck

ſtruck from each, which fomented by that tinder, that ill-willers to both do cheriſh it with, and propagated by dangerous matches, and confederacies, breaks out into that flame which poſſibly may never come to be extinguiſhed. Oh how do I long for the accompliſhment of that promiſe! *Iſa.* 11. 6. *The Wolf ſhall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard ſhall lie down with the kid, &c.* And *verſ.* 9. *They ſhall not hurt nor deſtroy in all my holy Mountain.* And *Iſa.* 65. 2. How ſhould I rejoyce to ſee ſome of that Propheſy fulfilled in our days. *Iſa.* 2. 4. *They ſhall beat their ſwords into Plowſhares, and their ſpeares into pruning-hooks, Nation ſhall not lift up ſword againſt Nation, neither ſhall they learn War any more.* I further conſider, if two things be ſtruck together, though one be hard, if the other be ſoft, (as a feather againſt a flint) not one ſpark will inſue. Thus it is, when perſons of rough and rugged tempers are matcht and mated with thoſe that are of a quite contrary diſpoſition (*viz.* full of the Ornament of a meek and quiet ſpirit) though that which is hard may daſh againſt that which is ſoft, yet no fire of contention is thereby inkindled, becauſe that which is ſoft ſoon yields, and ſo prevents the quarrel. We ſay, the ſecond perſon makes the fray, and *Solomon* gives us a better proverb, *Prov.* 15. 1. *A ſoft anſwer turneth away wrath,* and *Prov.* 25. 15. *A ſoft tongue breaketh the bones.* So will a flint break upon a cuſhion better than upon that which is hard. May I never be one of thoſe hard things which help to kindle fire, either national, domeſtical, or otherwiſe, but always poſſeſt of that chriſtian ſoftneſs, that may prevent the kindling of thoſe things, which upon a little undue colliſion would be all in ſparks, if not in flames.

CON-

CONTEMPLATION VII.

Of Fire kindled for want of vent, as in Hay, &c.

THere is one way more whereby Fires are ſometimes kindled, the conſideration whereof is capable enough of a practical improvement, and therefore I ſhall not paſs it by, and that is, by denying convenient vent to bodies, that are full of ſulphur. Thence it is, that Hay that is laid up too wet, and lies too cloſe together, is frequently ſet on fire, becauſe by that meanes thoſe ſulphurious particles, which would otherwiſe have exhaled by degrees, are pent in, and being ſo, do aſſociate one with another, provoke and excite each other, and when they have gotten a ſufficient number of them together, with united force do as it were break Priſon (for want of leave to go out quietly, now and then ſome of them, or ſome by ſome) and fly away like lightning. And thence is that fire which ſometimes is kindled in Hay, and other times in dung, upon the ſame account. Thoſe active particles which affected more liberty than they could ſingly obtain, and ſuch as might have been given them without any danger (for dry hay the ſulphurious particles whereof do exhale freely by ſome and ſome, doth not kindle of its ſelf) combine together to ſet themſelves free, as if they were of *Cæſar*'s minde, who ſaid, *Omnia dat, qui juſta negat*, when he was denied ſome priviledge, which he might juſtly challenge. But thoſe are not words fit to be taken into a ſubjects mouth.

Yet as unlawful as it is for thoſe that are under authority to act or ſpeak at any ſuch rate, as that of *Cæſar*. I cannot but think withall, that it is no point of prudence in Parents, Maſters, and other Governors, to deny to thoſe that are under them that deſi-

desirable liberty which they may safely give, any more than to give them that liberty which a due care of safety bids them to deny. That profound Philosopher and Statesman the Lord *Verulam* in his Essayes, *pag.* 86. speaks thus. To give moderate liberty for griefes and discontentments to evaporate, (so it be without too great insolency or bravery) is a safe way. For he that turns the humours back, and makes the wound bleed inwards, indangereth maligne Ulcers and pernicious imposthumations.

When I consider what Fires have formerly been kindled both at home and abroad, both in Church and State, and all for want of a little vent, otherwise called liberty; I say a little, (for too much may be as dangerous on the other hand;) pardon me, if I wish that in all places where it is vehemently desired, there might be as much of it as might consist with the real welfare and prosperity both of Church and State. And now, O Lord, thou who art only wise, cause Rulers every where to know what liberty may, and what may not be given, what liberty would truly make for them, and what against them; what would tend to kindle greater Fires than yet have been in the midst of us, and what might help to extinguish those fires of contention which are amongst us already, and to prevent others for the future. Such things as quietly would breathe themselves, and do themselves good, and the world no hurt, by their insensible exhalations, suffer them to evaporate, & let them not be so pent in, and shut up, as thereby to become needlesly exasperated, unavoidably united both in sufferings & discontents, and will they nil they, to fall on fire like a mowe of Hay laid too moistly and close together, which otherwise had never fired in and of its self; but now is forced to flame (though its self must be both the fire and fuel) & all for want of vent And now, O Lord, thou who hast made me the father of many children, grant I beseech thee to me and other parents, that wise behaviour towards them, that we may neither like old *Eli* spoil and undo them with too much lenity, nor like *Saul* enraged against his son *Jonathan*, endanger them by overmuch severity, but may so carry towards them, and have so much comfort in them, that we may be able to say concerning our children, as good old *Jacob* (that father of the Patriarks) did concerning his, *These are the children which God hath graciously given us*: and to think of them as the Psalmist represents them, *Psal.* 127. 3. *Lo! children are an heritage of the Lord, and the fruit of the womb is his reward.*

CON-

CONTEMPLATION VIII.

Of Fire kindled by pouring on Water, as in Lime.

IT is famouſly known that Fire is ſometimes kindled, otherwhiles encreaſed, even by the pouring on of water. By that means Lime is made to burn; which though it flame not out, yet both by its hiſſing, and ſmoaking, as alſo by its ability to burn other things, doth appear it ſelf to be ſet on fire. And we may daily obſerve, that Smiths do ſprinkle water upon their forges, thereby cauſing the Fire therein to burn ſo much the more eagerly. The reaſon of the former, *viz.* of Lime its burning when it meets with Water, ſeems to be this: Some particles of Fire do remain in Lime, after it hath been burnt in the Furnace (though cooled again) but cloſely united with certain particles of Salt, and by them moderated and kept quiet. But when water is poured upon it, then is the aſſociation that was betwixt the particles of Fire, and of Salt diſſolved, and the earthy parts ſeparated, which before lay betwixt the fiery particles, keeping them from joyning each with other, which being done, they all flock together and rendezvouz by themſelves, and ſo violently ſally out together, and forcibly take their flight in a conſiderable body or party, and thence comes that Fire which is kindled in Lime, which is true Fire, though it flame not by reaſon of thoſe watery parts which are commixed therewith, which cauſe ſmoak inſtead of flame.

Now when I think of Fire kindled by water, (its known oppoſite) in Lime as aforeſaid, me thinks the corrupt nature of man is juſt like Lime;

Lime; for when it meets with the holy Law of God, which is as contrary to it as water to Fire, (I mean, to the lusts and corruptions that are in it) how is it inkindled and enflamed thereby? Hence that complaint of *Paul*, *Rom.* 7.8. *Sin taking occasion by the commandement wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the Law sin was dead*, and *v.*13. *But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which was good, that sin by the Commandement might become exceeding sinful.*

Moreover, whereas those particles of Fire which are in Lime, are as it were, so many forraigners, or forraign guests that get into it, when the Lime-stones were burning within the Furnace (for in Lime it self there is little Sulphur, as appeareth by the difficulty of burning all or most of it away) and these forraign particles are they that do expose it unto being set on fire when water is put to it, I cannot but thence think of the danger of Kingdoms and Countries which are over-stocked with forraigners (especially if of a forraign Religion as well as Nation) especially if men of fiery principles and spirits: for though such persons may lie still and make no noise for a time, so long as there are other parties to ballance and tie their hands (as the particles of Salt doth that of Fire) and whilst they are not suffered to imbody and flock together; yet let an enemy come (like water upon lime) presently they hiss, and smoak, and reak, and heard together, and are ready to burn up all that comes neer them. May the Popish party never verifie what I have now hinted from the nature of Lime.

Neither

Neither is it unapt to be ſignificantly applyed, that Smiths do intend the heat of their fires by ever and anon ſprinkling on them ſmall quantities of water. Did they throw on much water it would extinguiſh it, but that little they uſe now and then, makes it to burn more fiercely. What better reſemblance can there be of the over-mild rebukes of parents towards obſtinate and diſſolute children. As good or better not chide, or not correct them at all, as do it over-gently, and *Eli* like, who only ſaid, *It is not a good report I heare of you my ſons, &c.* 1 *Sam.* 2. 24. Were ſuch deeds as theirs to be corrected only with words; eſpecially with ſuch ſoft words as thoſe, *v.* 25. *Why do you ſuch things? Nay my ſons, for it is no good report that I hear.* Did they *lie with the women that aſſembled at the door of the Tabernacle*, and is this all he hath to ſay to them? He had even as good have held his peace. This was but water ſprinkled upon the forge; this was but like an over-gentle purge, that ſtirs and troubles humors; but brings them not away. Thus to whip as it were with a fan of Feathers, is but to make an offenders remedy (which is correction) contemptible, and himſelf thereby more incorrigible. When the water of rebuke or correction muſt be uſed, take enough to quench the Fire, though not to drown or ſink the offender.

Laſtly, Lime that kindles at the approach of water (which one would think ſhould rather quench it if kindled before) is methinks a good embleme of Chriſtian zeale, and a good pattern for us in that behalf. Should not our zeal be heightned by oppoſition, like flouds that ſwell when

when they come at banks that hinder them. So did the zeal of *David*, when *Michal* derided him for dancing before the Ark. 2 *Sam.* 3.22. *I will yet be more vile* than thus (ſaid he) *viz. if that were to be vile*, to rejoyce before the Ark of God. So *Paul*, when ſome perſwaded him not to goe to *Jeruſalem* for fear of being bound there, made this anſwer, *Acts* 21.13. *I am ready not to be bound only, but to die at Jeruſalem for the name of Chriſt.* Thus were their diſſwaſions like water thrown upon Lime, which did meerly kindle it. Thus you ſee the way of kindling Lime ſhews us both what our Corruptions are, and what our Graces ſhould be, and woe unto us that our Corruptions have that vigour which our Graces want.

Henceforth then, by the help of God, I will endeavour that my luſts may be like green wood, which though it lie upon the fire, will hardlie burn, as being choked with its own moiſture; and that the Graces of Gods Spirit may be in me as ſo much Lime, the fiery particles whereof meeting with their old enemy water, preſently break off their aſſociation with other Elements, firmly unite among themſelves, and of potential fire become actual, and ſend up thoſe watery particles in ſmoak, which went about to extinguiſh them. If I cannot flame (as Lime cannot) yet I will endeavour to be as ſmoaking Lime or Flax, which Chriſt will not quench; and when I can do no more at preſent againſt thoſe luſts which fight againſt my ſoul: I will as it were hiſs at them, as lime doth at the approach of water, that is, teſtify my diſpleaſure and indignation againſt them.

FINIS.

Sixty One MEDITATIONS, AND REFLECTIONS UPON The most Remarkable Passages and Circumstances of the late DREADFUL FIRE.

PART III.

BY
SAMUEL ROLLE,
Minister of the Word, and sometime Fellow of *Trinity-Colledge* in *Cambridge*.

LONDON,
Printed for *Thomas Parkhurst*, *Nathaniel Ranew*, and *Jonathan Robinson*. 1667.

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Henceforth then, by the help of God, I will endeavour that my lusts may be like green wood, which though it lie upon the fire, will hardlie burn, as being choked with its own moisture; and that the Graces of Gods Spirit may be in me as so much Lime, the fiery particles whereof meeting with their old enemy water, presently break off their association with other Elements, firmly unite among themselves, and of potential fire become actual, and send up those watery particles in smoak, which went about to extinguish them. If I cannot flame (as Lime cannot) yet I will endeavour to be as smoaking Lime or Flax, which Christ will not quench; and when I can do no more at present against those lusts which fight against my soul: I will as it were hiss at them, as lime doth at the approach of water, that is, testify my displeasure and indignation against them.

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Sixty One

MEDITATIONS,

and Circumstances of the late

FIRE.

PART III.

SAMUEL ROADE

To the Right Worſhipful

Sir JOHN LANGHAM,

Knight and Baronet.

Sir THOMAS PLAYER,

Knight,

And Chamberlain of the City of *London*.

AND TO

RICHARD HAMPDEN

of *Hampden* in the County of *Bucks*, Eſquire.

AND

To all his dear Friends, (and ſometime Paſtoral-charge,) the Inhabitants of *Thiſtleworth* in the County of *Middleſex*.

S. R.

Dedicateth this part of his Meditations, and wiſheth the Bleſſings of the Life that now is, and of that which is to come.

To the Right Worshipful

Knight and Baronet,

Knight,

of Humpden in the County of

To all his dear Friends, (and Some

Dedicateth this part of Bath Minerva,
and wisheth the Blessings of this
Life that now is, and of
which is to come.

MEDITATIONS

Upon all the Remarkeable Paſſages and Circumſtances of the late dreadfull Fire.

MEDITATION I.

Of the Weight of Gods Hand in the late deſtruction of London by Fire.

REmarkable are thoſe expreſſions of *Job, cap. 6. ver. 2. & 3. O that my grief were thoroughly weighed! and my calamity laid in the Ballances together; for now it would be heavier than the ſand of the Sea: therefore my words are ſwallowed up,* and ver. 4. *For the Arrows of the Almighty are within me, and the poiſon thereof drinketh up my ſpirit: the Terrors of God do ſet themſelves in array againſt me.* How fitly may the people of *England*, but eſpecially the late Inhabitants of *London*, take up the ſame expreſſions? How juſtly may they wiſh that their Calamities were weighed by others, as well as felt by themſelves? But as it is impoſſible to find Ballances able to contain the ſands of the Sea, ſo is it next to impoſſible to find any, in which the Calamity of *London* may be weighed, or any thing able to weigh againſt them (ſuch is the heavineſs thereof) beſides the ſands of the Sea: Yea, if *Jo's* particular grief and miſery were heavier than thoſe ſands, may not the like be ſaid of what hath now befallen thouſands, all whoſe loſſes and croſſes put together (though not any of them ſingly) are certainly heavier than his either was,

or could be. I think it is so far from being a sin to put the judgements of God, as it were, into a scale, that we may learn how heavy they are (so far as we can attain) that I question not but it is a duety, and am sure it was the practice of that sensible Prophet holy *Jeremiah*, Lam. 4. 6. *The punishment of the Iniquity of the Daughter of my People, is greater than the punishment of the sin of* Sodome, *&c.* There we see he layes the punishment of *Sodome* in one scale, and that of *Jerusalem* in another, and weighing them against each other, concludes the latter to have been the heavier of the two: Yea, indeed the whole Book of *Lamentations* is, as it were, a pair of Ballances hung up, into which the Prophet is casting in the severall miseries of *Jerusalem* parcell by parcell (as he could take them up) till he had thrown in all; that he and others might understand to what weight the whole sum did amount. Though there are some that are ready to faint under the chastisements of the Lord, yet more are apt to despise them, especially after some time, and when the surprize is over, and in case they themselves are not so immediately, or so deeply concerned in them as others are. Then are they ready to say to others in reference to their losses, as the chief Priests and Elders did to *Judas*, in reference to the trouble of his mind, *Mat.* 27. 4. *What is that to us? look thou to that:* Or to shew themselves *Gallio* like of whom we read, that when the Greeks took *Sosthenes* the chief Ruler of the Synagogue and beat him before the Judgement-seat, *Gallio* cared for none of those things. Though he saw a Person of Quality and of Integrity unjustly beaten in a publike way, he regarded it not. Let the

Gallio's

Gallio's of this Age read what I am now to write as touching the miseries of poor *London*, and be perfectly unconcerned if they can, or exempt themselves, if it be possible, from having any share in that Calamity which they seem to slight, as if it were nothing to them, or as if the late fire had not so much as singed one hair of their heads, neither would, at the long run. I dare warrant them, that gray hairs of misery are upon them also (and upon that account,) though they know it not.

When I enter upon the Meditation of *Londons* destruction, I had need to fortifie my self with those words of *Solomon*, viz. that *It is better to go to the House of mourning, than to the House of feasting*, Eccles. 7. 2. For such a discourse can be no other, than as it were a House of mourning, yea, *As the mourning of* Hadadrimmon *in the Valley of* Megiddon, Zach. 12. 11. And now methinks the Book of *Jeremy* called *Lamentations* doth so wonderfully fit the present case of *London*, as if it had been calculated for the Meridian of that City, rather than of *Jerusalem*, or as if God had stretched out upon *London* the same line of confusion, as he did upon *Jerusalem*, or as if those divine thunder bolts, which were shot against both those famous Cities, had been made in one and the same mold, or as God speaks, Amos 4. 11. *I have overthrown some of you, as God overthrew* Sodome *and* Gomorrah. So, as God overthrew *Jerusalem* in like manner, and with many the same circumstances hath he destroyed *London*. Our sins were much what the same with theirs (as I have shewed, when I ennumerated the procuring causes of fire) and it is but just, that our plagues and punishments should be the same likewise:

Now where ſhall I begin my diſcourſe of *Londons* calamity? Or how can I do it without premiſing thoſe words of the Prophet, Jerem. 9. 11. *Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears*, &c. If my eyes be not a fountain my heart muſt needs be a Rock, and Lord ſmite thou that Rock, that waters may guſh out, whil'ſt I mention thoſe things that ſhould be bewailed, even with tears of blood.

That which firſt preſents its ſelf is the conſideration of what *London* was, nor can it be better expreſſed than in thoſe words, Lam. 1. 1 *The City that was Great amongſt the Nations, and Princeſſe amongſt the Provinces.* Sure I am *London* was the glory of *England*, yea the glory of *Great Britain*, yea the glory of theſe three Nations, if not in ſome ſenſe the glory of the whole World. But as the Prophet ſpeaks of *Ieruſalem*, ver. 9. *She came down wonderfully*, the ſame may be ſaid of *London*. But alas! What is *London* now, but another *Sodome* lying in aſhes? What is it but a heap of duſt and rubbiſh? The greateſt part of it ſeems to be converted into ſo many Church-yards, as conſiſting of nothing, but the Reliques of Churches, with waſte ground round about them, full of open Vaults or Cellers, like ſo many uncovered Graves, and fragments of houſes like ſo many dead mens bones ſcattered on every ſide of them: I had almoſt called it another *Smithfield* (alluding to the uſe that place was put to in the Marian dayes) for that every houſe was a kind of Martyr ſacrificed to the flames: and that (as is vehemently ſuſpected) by men of the ſame Religion, with thoſe that burnt the Martyrs in Queen *Maries* dayes: Witneſs that Frenchman that was convicted and executed upon his own acknowledgement of having

ving begun the Fire in *London*, whoſe confeſſion tels us that he was inſtigated by Papiſts (one or more) and the choice of his Confeſſor, that he was one himſelf. We can now no longer ſay of *London* Here it ſtands, but *Hic jacet* (as we ſay of one that is dead and buried) Here it lies; not that here it is, but that here it was.

May we not go on with thoſe words of *Ieremy* Lam. 1. 1. *How doth the City ſit ſolitary, that was full of people? How is ſhe become as a Widow?* Where are thoſe multitudes that inhabited *London* a few moneths ſince? How are they diſperſed and ſcattered into corners, ſome crowded into the Suburbs, others gone into the Country, diſabled in all likelyhood, from ever returning again, to ſettle as before; Who complains not that they ſcarce know where to find any body, even thoſe that they had wont to converſe and trade with, for that their former places know them no more, yea they hardly know the places again, where they dwelt formerly, or can find where thoſe houſes ſtood, which they inhabited many years together. To ſee a populous City ſo wofully depopulated in a few dayes time, and the late Inhabitants driven away as ſtubble before the wind; Whoſe heart would it not cauſe to bleed? How oft have I heard men ſay ſince the Fire we have occaſion to uſe ſuch and ſuch tradeſmen, that uſe to work to us but know not were to find them, we ſhould ſpeak with ſuch and ſuch Friends, but know not what is become of them, or whether they are gone. How many thouſand houſes (that were lately ſuch) do not now contain one Inhabitant, nor are fit to do it. This alſo ſhould be for a lamentation. Did the Egyptians mourn, when

but one was missing in every house; and shall not we when multitudes of whole households and houses are swept away all at once?

Why should I doubt to say, that a great part of the strength and defence of all *England*, yea, of all the three Kingdomes, is lost and taken away, in and by the destruction of *London*? Was not that great City able to have raised a mighty force in a short time, wherewith to have opposed an invading Forreigner? Was it not a Mine of Treasure, able to supply vast summes of monie for the use of King and Kingdome, at a short warning: and found as willing as able to do it? If a vast and stately Ship, as most that swim in the Ocean had been lost, how soon could, and did that famous City build such another? Surely, *London* was the sinews and the very right hand of all great and publick undertakings; and that they knew full well, that said in their hearts, Rase it, Rase it to the very ground. Are we not now like *Sampson* when his hair was cut, and should we go out to shake our selves as he did, *Judg.* 16. 20. should we not presently find it? Yea, are we not become like the men of *Sechem*, when they were sore, presently after their being circumcised, whom *Simeon* and *Levi* slew, *Gen.* 34. 25. Who can be a friend to *England*, or have any true English blood running in his veins, and not lament, to see so much of the strength of the Nation taken away at once? As *Jeremy*, speaking of what God had done to *Jerusalem*, (as in his own person) saith, *He hath made my strength to fall*, Lament. 1. 14. and then adds, *He hath delivered me into their hands, from whom I am not able to rise up*: That is not our case as yet, but how soon may it be, our present weakneſse

neſſe and obnoxiouſneſs conſidered?

Is it not worth taking notice of, that the beauty and ſplendor of *England* is defaced and loſt by the deſtruction of *London*? How deformed is a body without a head? and was not *London* the head of *England*, in that ſence that *Damaſcus* is ſaid to have been the head of *Syria*, and the head of *Ephraim* to have been *Samaria*, *Iſa.* 7. 8. That is the head City, for we acknowledge a head Superiour to that, yea, Supreme under God, *viz.* our Sovereign, as it is, *ver.* 9. the head of *Ephraim* is *Remaliahs* Son. As the face is to the body, ſo was *London* to *England*, *viz.* the beautifulleſt part of it, and look how men reckon it a great prejudice to their bodies when their faces are marred by any great deformity, ſo is it to the whole Land (which is to be conſidered as one body, and all the parts of it as members of each other) when ſcarce any thing of that is left which was the very face of it. They that ſaw only the other parts of *England* ſaw (as I may allude with reverence) but it's back parts. Was not *London* as it were the Throne of the Kings of *England* ſucceſſively, and other places in compariſon of it, but as it were their Footſtool? (you know to what I allude.) Now *London* is gone may we not write *Icabod* upon the Nation, for that the honour of it is departed? Now who can be a true Engliſhman and unconcerned for the honour of his Nation, and not troubled to ſee it lie in the duſt? How is the honour of a Nation inſiſted on? How many wars are commenced and continued in the world to vindicate the honour of particular Nations? How hard is it for Nations to recede from the very punctillio's of their honour? Now if God hath diſgraced us and weakned our

reputation (as certainly he hath done) by taking away the great City, ſurely it ſhould be for a Lamentation? If our Father hath ſpit in our face, as *Moſes* ſaid to *Miriam*, *ought we not to be aſhamed ſeven dayes*, yea, ſeven years we had need for ſuch a ſpitting of fire in our face, as hath befallen us? *Jeremy* puts it amongſt his Lamentations, *Lam.* 1.6. *From the Daughter of* Zion *all her beauty is departed.* We proceed.

Whoſe heart would it not grieve, to think what precious fuel went to feed that pernicious fire? Goodly Houſes, noble Halls, belonging to ſeveral Companies, ancient and worthy Hoſpitals, affording relief to multitudes of poor and diſtreſſed people, magnificent Churches built (and ſome of them but lately repaired) at a very great charge, places of Judicature, and for the honourable reception of Magiſtrates, as *Guild-hall*, and others, Common places (as I may call them) of Trade and Tradeſmen, ſuch as *Blackwell-hall*, and the *Royal Exchange*, (the onely ſanctuary that I hear of, to it's own Founder,) uſeful and eminent Schools, as *Pauls*, and others, one famous receptacle of Divines, by the name of *Zion* Colledge, another for Civilians, one Cathedral, for largeneſs and ſtateлineſs of building, exceeding all that I have before mentioned. All theſe are well known to have been fuel to that fire; yea, all theſe were but a part of it's fuel. There were other things, which though they did not as to bulk equalize thoſe I have mentioned, yet in worth and value did far exceed them. In ſome places you might have ſeen rich wines, it may be Sack and Hippocras, burning for no bodies uſe, elſwhere coſtly Oils ſwimming about the ſtreets, and afterwards

wards converted into flames. Was not the fire fed in ſome places with rich houſhold-ſtuffe, and dear furniture, in others with ſhop-goods and wares of great value, as fine clothes, and ſuch like, which their owners wanted opportunity to ſend away? How many precious druggs, and odoriferous ſpices went up in thoſe flames, as ſo much incenſe? How many wholſome Medicines, and powerfull Antidotes, and great Cordials, ſuch as Mithridate, Treacle, Spirituous Liquors, Bezoardick Powders, Confection of Alchermies, Chymical Oils, and Spirits, were in great quantities conſumed by that fire, as if they had been good for nothing, or as if nothing had been too good for it. And above all other loſſes, What Scholler, (that is ſo indeed,) can with drie eyes mention the ineſtimable loſſe of books that was ſuſtained by that mercileſſe fire, to the undoing of many Bookſellers, in one ſence, and of many more Schollers in another. How many learned and uſefull Authors in ſeveral Languages, Arts, and Sciences, Divines, both Polemical, and Practical, Fathers, Schoolmen, Phyſicians, Philoſophers, Lawyers, Hiſtorians, Antiquaries, Mathematicians, and others, beſides many precious manuſcripts (till then preſerved, like ſo many leaves of the Sybils) were then burnt to aſhes, as if our enemies the Papiſts, had been then diſarming us of ſome of our beſt weapons, wherewith we ſhould defend our ſelves againſt them? Yea, the very Sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, the Bible it's ſelf, as to many hundred Copies of it, was then taken from us and burnt (as if it had been a piece of hereſie, or had fallen into Popiſh hands, who brook it not in our genuine tranſlations.) And this were more to be

lamented

lamented than all the reſt, if that ſacred book, that book of books, might not more eaſily be reprinted, than many others that are of greater volume, and of which there are but few Copies extant. But a, for our *Biblia Polyglotta*, midwived into the world at a vaſt charge, and by the unſpeakable induſtry of many learned and famous men, to the great renown of themſelves and of this Nation, how many of them were conſumed, as if they had been ſo much waſte paper, and who is able to repair the loſſe? Theſe things, as I ſaid before, were the fuel that fed the flames of *London*, *Quis talia fando Temperet a lachrymis?* Who can think of ſuch things as theſe, and not draw waters and poure out before the Lord, as the Iſraelites did at *Mizpah?* To have made, or fed as many bonefires, as are uſuall upon great ſolemnities, with meer Muſk and Ambergreaſe, (if ſo much could have been had) had not been ſo great a charge and loſſe, as were all thoſe materials which went to foment the diſmall fire of *London*. Thoſe flames were higher fed (all things conſidered) than *Cleopatra* was, when, as it is ſtoried of her, ſhe drank diſſolved Pearls. How angry was the Almighty with us, when he would rather fling all this treaſure into the fire than ſuffer us to enjoy it? How unworthy did he proclaim us, when, in fact, he ſaid, better the fire ſhould have it than we?

But where did all this loſſe light? Was it upon *LONDON* only? Were few or none ſufferers but the Inhabitants of that City? Yea, doubtleſs, it was a terrible blow to the whole

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Nation or to the greateſt part of it. Who had any conſiderable intereſt in *England*, and none in *London* more or leſſe? As all Rivers run into the Sea, and all the lines of a Circumference meet in one Center, ſo did the intereſt of moſt conſiderable Engliſhmen, in *London*. Who had not ſome ſhare in that great ſhip, as I may call it, which is now blown up? They that had no immediate and perſonall intereſt in *London*, Had they not Relations Brothers or Siſters, yea it may be Sons or Daughters, or if not ſo, Kindred more remote, that were great ſufferers by this fire, and whoſe loſſes they ſhould lay to heart. *Nero* is ſaid to have wiſhed that *Rome* had had but one Neck, that he might cut it off at a blow. In reference to *England*, *London* was next to that one Neck, and hath not this fire cut it off at one blow? His Majeſty hath told us that his loſſe in the City was greater than any other mans, and what good Subject would not bewail that? But ſurely Reader it is thy loſſe, if thou art a Engliſh Proteſtant, as truely, though not as much as his. The loſſe was Catholick (that is univerſall) in the conſequences, as well as Roman Catholick in the Cauſes of it. But is this all that can be ſaid of the loſſe of *London*? Surely no, Read but the Book of *Lamentations* and you will find many more expreſſions applicable to the Caſe of *London*, beſides thoſe which I have taken notice of already, *Lam.* 1. 4. There ſaith the Prophet, *The wayes of Sion mourn, becauſe none come to the Solemn feaſts, her gates are deſolate.* All theſe their calamities are come upon us at once. Our Gates are laid waſte, our ſolemn Aſſemblies both Religious and Civil in moſt places of that which

which was called *London*, are unavoidably at an end, and if our wayes do not mourn, that is, if they have not a ſad and a ghaſtly appearance let all that paſſe by them Judge. Surely *London* is now the ſaddeſt ſpectacle that is this day in *England*.

Doth the circumſtance of time in which this fire befel us, add nothing to our affliction? Had we at the ſame time had many friends, and enemies but few or none, our miſery had been leſs: For then ſhould we have been much pitied, which had been ſome mitigation of our loſs: but did it not befal us at a time when we had few friends, but many forreign enemies round about us. This *Jeremy* lamented in reference to *Jeruſalem*, Lam. 1.2. *Amongſt all her lovers ſhe hath none to comfort her, all her friends have dealt treacherouſly with her, they are become her enemies.* Is it no aggravation of our miſery (ſurely it cannot be otherwiſe) to think how wretchedly our many enemies will triumph and inſult, becauſe of it, and cry, Ah, ah, ſo would they have it, *Lam.* 1.21. *All mine enemies have heard of my trouble, they are glad that thou haſt done it.* And *Lam.* 2.25. *All that paſs by clap their hands, they hiſs, and wag their head, for the daughter of Jeruſalem, ſaying, Is this the City that men call the perfection of beauty, the joy of the whole earth,* verſ. 16. *All thine enemies ſay, This is the day that we looked for, we have found, we have ſeen it,* verſ. 17. *The Lord hath cauſed thine enemies to rejoyce over thee, he hath ſet up the horn of thine adverſaries.* Alſo in *Lam.* 3.14, 45. You may ſee how much ſtreſs the prophet *Jeremy* did lay upon the inſultings of enemies, and how humbling a conſideration he took it for. When enemies congratulate our miſeries in

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ſtead of condoling them, it adds much. Surely *France*, but for ſhame, had rung bells, and made bonfires when the tidings of our fire did arrive there. God would that a people ſhould lay it to heart, when he expoſeth them to contempt. *Jeruſalem hath grievouſly ſinned, therefore ſhe is removed* (ſo is *London*) *all that honoured her, deſpiſe her, becauſe they have ſeen her nakedneſs.* He loves not his countrey that cares not how it is ſlighted, or who inſults over it.

What if it can be made out that there is no parallel at this day for *London*'s calamity, ſhould not that be for a lamentation, that God ſhould ſo puniſh us, as if he would make us an example to all the world, or as if we had been the worſt people in the world? *Ieremy* took that circumſtance to heart in *Ieruſalem*'s caſe, *Lam.* 2. 13. *What thing ſhall I liken to thee Oh daughter of Ieruſalem? What ſhall I equal to thee that thou maiſt be comforted?* So *Daniel* 9. 12. *For under the whole heaven hath not been done ſo great evil, as hath been done upon Ieruſalem.* If the like may be ſaid of *London*, (and indeed I have heard no man pretend the contrary at this day) its miſery muſt needs be great. If it be an unparallel'd ſtroke it muſt needs carry a great face of Divine wrath and diſpleaſure with it, and that doth add much, *Lam.* 2. 1. *How hath the Lord covered the daughter of Zion with a cloud in his Anger? and remembred not his footſtool in the day of his Anger.* Ver. 3. *He hath cut off in his fierce Anger all the horns of Iſrael.*

Many things in this judgement ſeemed to carry with them a great face of Divine Anger, as namely, for that the Lord ſeemed to deſtroy *London*, ſo far as he went without any pity. Such a thing as this is be-

bewailed, *Lam.* 2. 2. *The Lord hath ſwallowed up all the habitations of Jacob and hath not pitied*, And verſe 17. *The Lord hath thrown down and hath not pitied.* If God had taken away the houſes of rich men that could have born their loſs, and mean time ſpared the houſes of ſuch as were poor, there had been pity in that, but he was pleaſed to take all before him, and with the ſame beſome of deſtruction to ſweep away the habitions of the pooreſt, as well as of the moſt rich. And did not God's turning a deaf ear to all the prayers and interceſsions that were made, as for the greateſt part of *London* whilſt the fire was, and going on to deſtroy notwithſtanding though they cried unto him day and night that he would ſtay his hand and ſpare the remainder, I ſay did not that ſpeak God exceeding angry. This was one of *Ieremies* complaints, *Lam.* 3. 8. Alſo when *I cry and ſhout he ſhutteth out my prayer*, and verſe 44. *Thou haſt covered thy ſelf with a cloud, that our prayers ſhould not paſs thorough.* God did in effect ſay that, *Though Noah, Daniel and Iob ſtood before him, yet would he not be intreated for the City.* When prayers can prevail no longer in ſuch a caſe as that was, it is a ſign God is exceeding angry. Moreover the fierceneſs of the judgement, and the mighty force it came with, and the quick diſpatch it made, intimates, as if God for that time had abandoned all pity towards *London*: For may not theſe words of *Ieremy* be applied to us, *Lam.* 3. 10. *He was unto me as a Bear or as a Lion he hath pulled me in pieces, he hath made me deſolate.*

If any man that reads theſe things be yet inſenſible of the heavineſs of Gods hand in this ſtroke let him beſides all that hath been ſaid, conſider how

how unexpected, and how Incredible a thing it was that *London* ſhould be almoſt totally conſumed by fire, ere this year were at an end? Now what, but the greatneſs of this judgement made it ſo incredible till it came? That ſome few houſes might have been fired in a ſhort time, we could eaſily have believed, but not that ſo many as the Prophet ſpeaks, *Lam.* 4. 12. *The kings of the earth, and the inhabitants of the world would not have believed that the enemy ſhould have entred into the gates of Jeruſalem.* To think a judgement too great to be inflicted, and yet when it is inflicted to make light of it, are very inconſiſtant things, and mighty ſelf-contradictions. He that ſhould have come to a man worth eight or ten thouſand pound, a week before the fire, and told him that within ten days he ſhould not be worth ſo many hundreds, would he not have laugh'd at him, and ſaid in his heart, How can that be? Had all his eſtate been in houſes, ſome in one ſtreet, ſome in another, he would never have dream'd that they ſhould be all fired together, or within a few days of one another: And yet it is well known to have been the caſe of many to have been worth a good eſtate one day, and the next day, by the fire to have been reduced almoſt to nothing. How are the words of *Jeremy* upon this occaſion revived, *Lam.* 4, 5. *They that did feed delicately are deſolate in the ſtreets; they that were brought up in ſcarlet imbrace dunghils.* Great and ſudden downfalls cannot but move compaſſion in any man that hath bowels. As *Jeremy* ſpeaks of the *Nazarites*, Lam. 4. 6, 7. *That they who were purer then ſnow, whiter then milk, their viſage was become blacker then any coal*, ſo to think how they that lived in great port and faſhion, are many of them, as in the

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turning of a hand brought exceeding low, they and theirs, ſhould much affect us. The deſolation of ſo many houſes is a ſad ſight, but the ruine of ſo many families as this fire hath ruin'd, is yet a ſadder conſideration. Surely it hath fallen heavy, both upon rich and poor, rich men in the loſs of their eſtates, poor men in the loſs of their friends. The rich man hath loſt his talent, and the poor man hath loſt his ſteward that improved it for him in a way of relief and charity.

Is it not worth our adding, and throwing into the ballance, that this loſs by fire trod upon the heels of two other greater loſſes, *viz.* By war and peſtilence, the latter of which, not only diminiſhed our eſtates, but (which was worſe) deprived us of near and dear relations: yea, moreover that this judgement came before the other two were gone, or either of them, for is not the ſword yet drawn, and doth not the peſtilence ſtill devour? ſo that theſe three judgements have appeared together like three terrible Comets or Blazing-ſtars threatning utter deſtruction, and God hath come out againſt us riding as it were upon three ſeveral dreadful horſes, black, red and pale, to allude to what is ſpoken in the *Revelations*: And as for what concerns mens eſtates, it is well known that the ſword and peſtilence in ſeveral years hath not ſo much exhauſted them, as this fire did within a few days.

Meerly to avoid tedioufneſs I ſhall here add but two things touching *London's* loſs (though otherwiſe much more might be added) one is, that it is Invaluable, and the other that in the eye of reaſon it is Irreparable. It is in the firſt place Ineſtimable, namely, how great the loſs is for the preſent, but

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more eſpecially what ſad products & conſequences it may draw after it, for the future, whither the tayl of the Comet (as I may call it) may reach. It is a common, and I believe a true ſaying, amongſt the ſufferers by this fire, that they have loſt ſo much that they themſelves cannot tell what they have loſt. Only he that can tell the number of the Stars, and call them all by their names, doth know what the ſum total of this loſs is, and what are all the particulars of it, and what influence this Judgement may have upon the times to come; for certain it is the children which are yet unborn will in time fare the worſe for it. Who can eſtimate how great a dammage and confuſion will ariſe firſt and laſt from one branch of this loſſe *viz.* the burning of Bills, Bonds, Leaſes, Conveiances, Books of Debts, and Accompts, and other Writings of great conſequence, which was all that many men had to ſhew for the greateſt part of their Eſtates; what contention and confuſion this one loſs may produce no heart can conceive? who knows not that paper and parchment, ſuch as the contents thereof may be, may be of greater value than Pearls and Diamonds? How many had rather, yea had better have loſt thouſands of pounds, than ſome few ſheets of paper, that went to feed thoſe flames? O fire ineſtimably dear! O loſs unvaluable, Could this loſs be repaired the matter were not ſo great, but it either is or ſeems to be irrepairable at leaſtwiſe in the memory of any man now living. So that we may here take up the ſame complaint which the prophet did, Lam. 2. 13. *Thy breach is great like the Sea, Who can heal thee?* Or as he Jer. 30. 15. *Why crieſt thou for thine affliction, thy ſorrow is incurable?* I queſtion not the Omnipo-

tency of God, but, according to what is usual with God to do in the world, we can none of us expect to see that breach made up in many years, which was made upon *London* in a few dayes. Now put all these things together, and then tell me if his heart be not harder then the nether Milstone, that can see what *London* hath suffered, and not mourn with a very great mourning. If so a mazeing a Judgement will not awaken men, they are like to sleep in their security, till they come to wake in Hell, where none can sleep; for the smoke of their torment ascendeth continually, and they have no rest day nor night.

But are there any that call themselves Englishmen, that do not only not mourn over, but rejoyce and triumph in the destruction of *London*? Let them believe themselves to be legitimate if they can; at leastwise let them not think, that others will ever believe that there is one drop of true English Blood running in their veins: Or let the parents of their Bodies be who they will, I am sure that in another sense they are of their Father the Devil, and his works they do. If there could have bin mirth in Hell there would have been rejoycing there at the firing of *London*, as there is in heaven at the Conversion of a sinner. How worthy were they to have danced in those flames, who (if any such be) have sung and danced at the remembrance of them?

But what if some not only rejoyce in this being done, but had the heart to do it? How long was it ere I could believe there was any such Monster in the World? till I heard of one convicted for the same, and that by his own sensible and persevering Confession. Lord, What mischief

chief have they done? Is there any sacrifice for their sin? One would think, if there were no Hell, God would prepare one on purpose, for such miscreants, to burn them in, who have burn't up the Estates and Livelihoods of so many thousands. But, Lord, thou knowest it is not my desire they should, nor is it my opinion, that the blood of Christ, laid hold on by faith, is not able to save their souls. And oh! Though their bodies should be given as meat to the fowles of the air, or fewel to temporal flames, yet that their souls might be delivered from the wrath to come! Let them rely upon no pardon from that triple crowned blasphemer of *Rome*, who cannot so much as pardon his own sins, and it is well the (light of such men considered, and how they hold the truth in unrighteousnesse) if they be not unpardonable. He that cheats men into sin, let him not cheat them into Hell, by causing them to rest upon his mock indulgences, who is easie enough to pardon such peccadilloes in his account, as are the burning of Protestant Cities, yea, can be willing to enroll them amongst his Saints. I confess a red letter would do well before their names, but onely in token of blood and cruelty. But, Lord, I desire to look higher, than those instruments of our late fire, even unto thee. Thou hast set us on fire round about, and oh that we could lay it to heart as becometh us. We would hold our peace, because thou, Lord, hast done it. If thou hadst so pleased *London* might have been like the Bush, which did burn, but was not consumed; but thou didst give it up to the flames: Lord, at what a rate hath *London*, yea *England* sinned that thou hast thus punished it? Thou dost many

times punish men lesse than their sins deserve, but never more. Which of us have not contributed by our iniquities, to this as well as to other judgements? Which of us have not cause to say, Lord forgive us, that by our sins we have infected *London* and *England* with a devouring Plague, that we have helpt to embroil it in a consuming War, yea, that we have had our hands as by way of demerit in kindling the late Fire, which burnt *London* to the ground.

MEDITATION II.

Upon sight of the Weekly Bill for London *since the Fire.*

WIth how sad a heart have I read that Bill, finding but sixteen Parishes within the wals now pretended to, and considering with my self by how great a Synecdoche some of those Parishes do at this day go by their former names? It is that figure, which puts a part for the whole (yea a small part too) the compounding Figure as I may call it, that takes as it were, five shillings or half a Crown for a pound) which alone warranteth us to call *London*, *London* still, and severall parishes (said to be now standing) by the names which they did bear formerly. The unjust Steward, *Luke* 16. 7. used subtraction; onely where a hundred was owing he bid them set down fifty, but we (as if that were to be more just) proceed by way of multiplication setting down a a hundred for ten or twenty. We view our City as it were through a microscope, which represents the leg of a Flea so big, as if it were the leg

leg of ſome creature far bigger than its whole Body. So might we call a ſometimes great and famous Inne, the Crown or Miter, as it was formerly called, though burnt down to the proportion of a Cottage, becauſe the ſign and ſign poſt are ſtill to be ſeen, and there is yet ſome ſmall part of the old Building. Is it not rather the Epitome of *London*, which we now have than *London* it ſelf, as if the abridgement of a Book in Folio (be it *Aquinas* his *Summes* or any other ſuch) ſhould go by the name of *Aquinas* his *Sums* (or what other name it bore in Folio) when contracted into a ſmal Manual or Pocket-Book. It is *London* in ſhort hand, ſuch as might contain the Decaſogue within the compaſſe of a ſingle penny, rather than ſo at length if yet we may call it *London*.

Is it not rather *London's* Remains and Ruins, its Urn and Aſhes than *London* it ſelf? So a Burgeſſe or two in Parliament ſtands for a whole Town, a Knight or two for a whole Shire, ſo Lords Spitual and Temporal write themſelves, *London*, *Yorke*, *Lincoln*, *Canterbury*, as if they were whole Cities or Towns, being indeed but ſingle and individual perſons. Methinks it is as if *Judah* and *Benjamin* were called *Iſrael*, being indeed but two Tribes of Twelve: Nor am I leſſe affected with that dolefull parentheſis in two ſhort words (*viz.* Now ſtanding) How am I puſht with the two horns of that parentheſis, putting me upon this dilemma, that I know not whether more to be thankfull, that all *London* is not fallen, or more to lament that ſo ſmall a part of it is yet ſtanding. The late Plague gave us to ſee and expect *London* without many Inhabitants (at leaſtwiſe for a

time, but to see *London* with but a few habitations was that we never lookt for. We have lately known a Plague, that laid thousands of Citizens under ground, but who dreamt of a Fire that would lay the City it self upon the ground? Hear O Heavens, and be astonished O earth. I find as many sorts of diseases in the Bill now as ever. They find men out go whither they will they crowd into Families, that have scarce room enough to turn themselves in. Death will not spare, (as if it pitied those whom the fire hath not spared) Mens tabernacles must go to wrack as well as their houses. But to confine my self to the business of the fire.

Methinks *London* at this day is a lively Emblem of a Professor fallen from his first Love, or rather a backsliding Professor is just in such a condition as *London* is at this day. He goes by the same name as formerly, but How far is he from being the same person he was? How like is he to those Churches the outsides whereof are yet standing; their walls and steeples make such a fair show, that they, who should view them at a distance, would think, they were just as before; but alas! Their insides are gone, they are fit for no use, yea their very out-sides are so frail and brittle, that in a windy day men are loth to pass by them for fear of being knockt on the head. What havock hath sin made in all the faculties of such men (which, if the Soul may be compared to a City, may be called the several streets of that City) How hath error destroyed their understandings, ill habits their wills and inclinations to good, the World consumed their spiritual affections, all these things conspired to desolate and lay

waste

waste their Consciences; and now those men though called Christians still (and glorying in that name) lie just like *London* in dust, and rubbish, and ashes. O Lord, Give *England* to meet thee in the way of thy judgements, by a timely repentance, yea give these three Kingdomes so to do, lest it come to pass that hereafter *England* should be called *England*; and Great *Britain*, Great *Britain*, and the three Kingdomes so; by as great a Synecdoche, as the poor Remains of *London* are now called *London*, and the Reliques of some streets (said to be now standing) by the name those streets had, when in their beauty and glory.

MEDITATION III.

Upon the Discourses occasioned by the late Fire, both then and since.

SOme came to *London* in the time of the Fire, having heard of it (but not seen it) and probably their first question was, Is the Fire out? Alas! no, would they say that answered them, It is so far from being out, that it rageth more and more. They that heard it was not out would be asking how far it was gotten, whereabouts it was: Then would men begin to reckon up the Streets and Churches that were burnt down already, *Thames* street is gone, and *Fish* street is gone, and *Gracious* Street is down, and now it is at such a place, and such a place, and so they would proceed. Is the Fire abated would others say? Is there any hope of extinguishing it? We see little sign of it would some reply, It is feared it will consume the whole City and Suburbs too. Why do

they not play their Engines would some cry? Alas they are broken and out of Kelter, we little expecting such a sad time as this. Some it may be would say, Why do so many people stand gazing on, and not run to help? The Fire hath now got such head and is so fierce would they say that there is no coming near it: But why do they not pull down houses at a distance? that is long work would some reply, and seeing they cannot carry away the timber, when they have done, it will do but little good. Do not the Magistrates, would some say, bestir themselves to put a stop to it? It is like they do what they can, but they are even at their wits ends, or like men astonished. They that stood and look't on would cry out, See how it burns *East* and West at the same time, not onely with the wind, but against it. Hear how it crackles like a Fire in thorns: Hear what a rattling noise there is with the crackling and falling of timber. Look you there saith another just now the Fire hath taken this or that Church, which alas is full of goods, now it is just come to the Royall Exchange; by and by would they say, See how presently such a stately house was gone, it was but even now, that it began to fire, and it is consumed already: Oh what a wind is here, See how it is as bellows to the Fire, or as the breath of the Almighty blowing it up. You would wonder to see how far the sparks and coles doe fly. It is strange they do not fire all the houses on the other side of the water, where abundance of them do light. I can think of nothing, saith one, but of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, when I see this light. Alas, Alas! cries one, now do I see such a good friends house to

take

take fire, and, by and by, now do I ſee the houſe of another good friend of mine on fire: in that houſe, that you ſee now burning dwelt a Brother or Siſter of mine, or ſome other near Relation. Others would come dropping in and ſay, They had ſtaid ſo long as to ſee their own houſes on fire and then they came away and left them, Such as dwell near to *London* and to the Road would cry as they lay in their beds, we hear the Carts rumbling and poſting by continually. Thoſe that were within the City, at that time, would ever and anon ſay to one another, Did you hear that noiſe. There was a houſe blown up, and by and by there was another houſe blown up. Others would cry, The fire is now come near the Tower, and if the powder be not removed, God knowes, what miſchief will be done with that. One while the people would take an Alarm of Treachery, and cry out that the French were coming to cut their throats.

Such whoſe houſes the Fire had not yet ſeized, but was haſtning towards them, you muſt ſuppoſe to have made this their diſcourſe, What ſhall we do for Carts to carry away our goods, we have offered three, four pounds a load for Carts to carry them but two or three miles off, and cannot have them. One while they cry there is an order to prevent the coming in of more Carts, it being thought that whilſt we mind the ſaving of our goods, we neglect the putting out the fire, and now will our houſes and goods burn together, and ſo we ſhall looſe all. Such as had the opportunity to convey their goods, as far as the fields and no farther. How did they diſcourſe of the hardſhip they muſt under-

dergoe, if they ſhould leave their goods, they would be ſtollen; if they ſhould look to them themſelves (as many had no body elſe to do it for them) they muſt have but little ſleep, and a cold open lodging, and what if it ſhould rain? And ſome we may imagine were diſcourſing, what they and theirs ſhould do, their houſes and goods being burnt, where they ſhould put their heads as having neither money nor friends, at leaſtwiſe ſo near that they knew how to get to them. Theſe were but ſome of thoſe dreadfull ſtories that men and women talkt of: I could tell you how women with child would ſay, They had but a month or a week to reckon, and this had frighted them almoſt out of their wits, ſo that they found it would go very hard with them. Others again would ſay, They were but ſo many weekes gone, but were ſo diſturbed, that they did never look to go out their full time: Others, it is like, would ſay, They were ſo ill with the fright they had taken, that they thought verily it would kill them, or that they ſhould never come to themſelves whilſt they lived. Would not others again report of ſome here and there, who by venturing too much in the Fire, or ſtaying too long to bring away their goods, had loſt their lives and periſhed in the flames?

Neither were all ſad diſcourſes exſtinguiſhed with the fire: For ſince that time it hath been the manner of Friends, as they met to ask ſome accompt of the loſſes each of other. Pray what loſt you, ſaith one, by the Fire? I loſt the houſe I lived in, ſaith one, which was my own, or as good as my own by virtue of a long Leaſe and a great Fine. I loſt my houſes and goods, ſaith another.

I lost to the value of two thousand pounds, saith one, I four: I, six, saith another. I have lost the one half of what I had saith one: I have lost all saith another, I am burnt to my very shirt. I have lost more than all, saith a third, for I by this meanes am left in a great deal of debt, that I shall never be able to pay, I had many things belonging to other men committed to me, which are swept away. Saith another I am not only undone my self, but so many of my Children and near Relations, it may be all of them are undone by this Fire, as well as my self. But I need to say the less of this, because every dayes converse will or may tell us, what men talk since the dismall Fire of and concerning it. O Lord, I see thou who canst put a Song of deliverance into our mouths when thou pleasest, canst also fill us with complaints and lamentations when thou wilt, and make our own tongues, as it were to fall upon us, how thou canst make us out of the abundance of our hearts, to speak such things as will terrifie both ourselves and others, and cause both our own ears and theirs to tingle, how easily thou canst find us other discourse than to ask and tell what newes is stirring (for who regarded news whilst these things were in agitation) who seemed to mind what became of affairs either by Sea or Land? I see how easily thou canst imbitter our Converse one with another, and make us speak so as to break each others hearts, that use to delight and refresh each other by their pleasing conferences and communications, so that solitude may become lesse afflictive, than that good company, which was wont to be very acceptable. Would not our tongues rise up in judge-

judgement against us, if we should ever forget the sad stories we have told of thy most heavy hand upon us? Seeing thou hast thus seasoned our communication, as it were with salt, and salted it, as it were with fire, shall that which is rotten and unsavoury proceed out of our mouths from henceforth? Let us remember, what we said to others, and what others said to us, that we may never be unmindfull of what thou hast done both to us and them, we have spoken with sad countenances and with aking hearts. Oh that by the sadnesse of our countenances our hearts might be made better.

MEDITATION IV.

Upon the dishonest Carters, who exacted excessive Rates.

IS there a Conscience in men, or is there none? Or is there some such thing in Pagans and Infidels, but no such thing in Christians? or is there a Conscience in the Christians of other parts, but none in Englishmen? Or is there some in other Englishmen, but none in plow-men, and Carters, at leastwise in the most of them, who came to help the Londoners away with their goods in the time of the Fire? Whatsoever there be in other men, there seems to have been no such thing in them; witness their plowing, as they did, upon the backs of poor Citizens, and making long furrowes in the time of their utmost Calamity. Londoners have been glad sometimes, if they could get but one in ten of their broken Chapmen, but you, when you saw a fire that was like

like to break hundreds of Citizens, would have ten for one; five pound for ſo little work, as ten ſhillings, if not five, would have been taken for at another time. *Let it not be known in Gath*: never let Papiſt, or Turk, or Jew, read this paper, whereby to know, what you have done: They would think it were never poſſible, to go to heaven in your Religion. Who can believe you to be ſo much, or ſo good as meer men? For can there be a man without humanity? The Apoſtle ſaith, *He is not a Jew that is a Jew outwardly*, and may I not ſay, He is not a Man that is a Man outwardly, but he that hath the tender heart and bowels of a man. As there are, *Wolves in Sheeps cloathing*, (as our Saviour ſpeaks) ſo, Are there not evil Angels appearing in the ſhape of Men? Did you do as you would be done by (which is the Rule of Juſtice) when you ſeemed to vie with the fire it's ſelf, which ſhould be moſt cruel, you or it? It gave moſt men ſpace to carry away their goods, you might have given them opportunity to have done it, and would not, but upon moſt unreaſonable tearms, ſuch as many were not able to come up to. Should Landlords, knowing you cannot live without ground to work upon, make you pay ten times ſo much Rent as it is worth, How would you curſe them, and be ready to call them Baptized Jews, Uncircumciſed Turks, or other names, as bad as thoſe; and ſuch as I dare not call you, (whatſoever you deſerve) as remembring, how the *Arch-angel durſt not bring a railing accuſation againſt the Devil himſelf, but only ſaid, The Lord rebuke thee*, Jude the 9th. Were any of you dangerouſly ſick, and in great extremity, and being ſo, ſhould ſend for the only Phyſician near at hand, and he

ſhould

should refuse to come, though it were to save your life, unless you would give him ten Fees for one; would you not go nigh to use that rude Proverb, concerning him, *viz.* That he would get the Devil and all? and would you not think, that one good angel might be better to him, than ten evil ones (and such are all that are ill gotten)? Were your Wives in sore Travail, and but one Midwife to be had, that were able to deliver them, and she, knowing their necessity to make use of her, should so far work upon it, as to capitulate for as many poupds as she used to have shillings, or else, give out, that, for her, mother and child should both perish together: How would you make the Countrey ring of the savage cruelty of so extorting a Midwife? If you had urgent occasion for money, and some biting Usurer, knowing of it, should make you, directly or indirectly, to pay twenty or thirty pound *per Cent.* how would you take on at him, and clamour upon him? Such was your dealing with poor Londoners in the day of their distress.

As the raging Sea, when men are in danger of being cast away, will have a great part of their lading cast into her lap, or not suffer them to ride safe; or as Thieves, do make men buy their lives at a great rate, which they ought nevertheless to save, and suffer them to enjoy free-cost; or, as the Devil himself, when he offers his assistance to men in their great straights, exacts that of them for his pains, which is more worth than the whole world, *viz.* Their Souls; requiring to be paid manifold more than his work comes to: Such was the equity you used towards distressed Citizens in the time of the fire, (as if you had been

Jews

Jews and they Samaritans.) There was a Samaritan himſelf, who when he ſaw a ſtranger that had been robb'd, and wounded, and half-dead, had compaſſion on him, bound up his wounds, paid for his lodging, took care of him, *Luke* 10 33. Surely you are no akin to that good Samaritan; you took from them whom the fire had robbed before; you made their wounds bleed afreſh with your unkindneſs; you even killed thoſe outright with your cruelty, whom fire, and grief, and fear had made half dead before.

Did you ever read that Text *Acts* 28. 2. where *Paul* ſaith, *The barbarous people ſhewed us no little kindneſſe, for they kindled a fire, and received us every one, becauſe of the preſent rain, and becauſe of the cold.* This did Barbarians to ſtrangers, when expoſed but to rain and cold, which is nothing like ſo dangerous as fire: but what you Carters, called Chriſtians, did to men of your own Nation, and of your own Religion, the world knows too well; as if you, indeed, had been the Barbarians; and they that *Paul* ſpeaks of had been Chriſtians. Will not the Chriſtian-like carriage of thoſe Barbarians judge the barbarous carriage of you Chriſtians (if I may ſo call you)? Have you never read thoſe words, 1 *Cor.* 6. 10. *Extortioners ſhall not inherit the Kingdome of God?* nor thoſe in 1 *Theſ.* 4. 6. *Let no man go beyond or defraud his brother in any matter, becauſe the Lord is the avenger of all ſuch.* Quit your ſelves, if you can, from having been Extortioners, and ſuch as have defrauded and gone beyond others. I doubt not in the leaſt, but this was a real theft in the ſight of God: You think it was not, becauſe they conſented and contracted to give you ſo much: But

ſo

so may a man consent to deliver his purse to a high-way man, that threatneth, if he do not so, he will have his life: Doth that make it no theft on his part that takes it? A man may consent to that which is a real injury to himself, to avoid a greater than that; all that can be said, is, No man can be forced, if he consent. *Volenti non fit violentia*, is true, but not *Volenti non fit injuria*. If you have not wronged the poor Citizens, whether with or against their consents (as it was partly both) never were men wronged. How many, think you, did lose all, or the most of their goods, because they had not wherewithall to give those unreasonable rates which you demanded, who yet could and would have honestly paid you as much as you in reason and conscience could have demanded for the removal of their goods. Will not the great God, think you, place the loss of those goods, and the undoing of those poor families to your accompt? Therefore, O Countrey men (honest Countreymen I must not call you till you better deserve it) let my advice be acceptable to you: Blush for what you have done, repent, restore, make satisfaction to the full. What you have gotten in that way (unless it be such of you as ventured your own lives, or the lives of your beasts, by going near the fire) will never thrive with you, yea, may prove a moth and canker to all you have besides. Who were the large contributers to all Briefs, when your Towns and Houses were at any time burnt, but these very Citizens, whom you have used thus unkindly? If fire should happen in your thatch, which may easily be, (and which you have provoked God to send) how dearly would you miss that City which you

have

have ſo inhumanely oppreſſed? You that have not pitied Londoners, pity your own ſouls: and remember that true ſaying, Unjuſt gain is not remitted, (that is, forgiven) unleſſe, intentionally by thoſe that cannot, and actually by thoſe that can, reſtitution be made.

MEDITATION V.

Upon thoſe that ſtole what they could in the time of the Fire.

IT ſhould ſeem it was not enough for Londoners to have their houſes conſumed by fire, and their faces grownd by unconſcionable Carters, demanding half as much for carrying away their goods, as ſome of them were worth; (yea, ten times ſo much as was their due) but, as a further aggravation of their miſery, God was pleaſed to give *London*, as he gave *Jacob*, to the ſpoil, and as he gave *Iſrael* to the robbers. How many, under pretence of reſcuing their neighbours goods out of the fire, carried them away for altogether, (as if all things now had been common, becauſe the fire had broken down mens incloſures): Was this your kindneſſe to your friends? Was this the pity that ſhould be ſhewed to them that are in miſery? I have heard indeed of *Janizaries*, (that is, Turkiſh Souldiers), that when fires have been in *Conſtantinople*, would fall to plundering; but, are you Turks? Some living upon the Sea-coaſt, may, perchance, gain now and then by racks, bringing rich goods to their hands; but then, it is preſumed, the owners are caſt away, or cannot be known. They ſay, ſome Nurſes, that uſe to attend on ſuch as

have the plague, are wont to make away all they can lay their hands on: but then they ſtay, till the people whoſe goods they take, be dead, and have no further need of them. But you, barbarous wretches, ſtript the poor Citizens, being yet alive, and likely to live, and to need all they had, and more: Do you think much, to be chid for what you have done? Alas, yours is a great crime, It is *an iniquity to be puniſhed by the Judges*, yet, I had rather you would judge your ſelves for it, ſatisfie for the wrong you have done, and ſo avoid the puniſhment both of God and Men. You make me think of the Eagle, that ſtole away a coal from the Altar, and fired his own neſt with it. Were they not fire-brands ſnatcht out of the fire that you ſtole away? If you continue to keep them in your Neſts, ſure enough they will ſet them on fire; I mean, they will bring a curſe upon all the reſt of your ſubſtance. You have done that, which one would have thought, no mans heart could ſerve him to have done. If other Thieves deſerve hanging, you are worthy of a Gallows as high as *Haman's*; for, the circumſtance of time makes your ſin out of meaſure ſinful. Would you offer to be ſtealing when God was burning? Would you take from thoſe, to whom you had more need to have given? Now you are told of your fault, be not worſe than *Judas* himſelf, who, when admoniſhed but by his own conſcience, came and brought back that wages of unrighteouſneſs, which he had received, *viz. The thirty pieces of Silver*. I do not adviſe you, by any unneceſſary confeſſion, to bring your ſelves into danger; ſo you do every man right, what matter is it, whether they know who it was that wronged them?

them? If ever God pardon you, ſee one Condition that muſt be performed by you, *Ezek.* 33. 15. *If the wicked reſtore the pledge, give again that he hath robbed; he ſhall ſurely live, he ſhall not dye.*

MEDITATION VI.

Upon unconſcionable Landlords, demanding exceſſive Fines and Rents, ſince the Fire.

IS it a good Rule, that men may take as much as ever they can get, for ſuch things as men cannot live without? Surely, that is the Rule you go by, in asking and taking ſuch vaſt Fines and Rents for the houſes you lett. By that Rule, if ſome few men could be ſuppoſed to have all the Corn in *England* in their hands, they might ſell it for five pounds a buſhel: for men would give it, if they had wherewithall, rather than be without bread, which is the ſtaffe of life: But how would you curſe them that ſhould ſerve you ſo? You ſeem to have made a Covenant with fire, (as ſome are ſaid to have done with death, *Iſa.* 28. 15.) and with flames (as others with hell) to be at an agreement, that if an overflowing ſcourge ſhould paſſe thorough, it might not hurt you, as who ſhould ſay, If your houſes be burnt hereafter, yet they are paid for; ſuch Fines may be ſufficient to build them again: Methinks, I hear the great God ſaying, *Your Covenant ſhall be diſannulled, and your Agreement ſhall not ſtand; when the overflowing ſcourge ſhall paſſe thorough, you ſhall be trodden down by it*, as it is, *verſe* 18. Like the builders of *Babel*, you ſeem to have been raiſing a Tower, to fortifie

your ſelves againſt heaven, but God will confound your Languages. Would you anticipate the rebuilding of the City, by obliging men alwayes to remain in the Suburbs? I wiſh, it may not be ſaid of you in a bad ſenſe (what the Pſalmiſt ſayes of others in a good) that *You take pleaſure in the ſtones of* London (*as they of* Zion) *and favour the duſt thereof*, Pſalm 102. 14. becauſe its ruine hath been your riſe. I doubt not, but the Fines you have taken, and the Rents you have agreed for, will be the undoing of many a poor Family, that, but for thoſe exactions, might have made a ſhift to live. Poſſibly, all the gains of your Tenants, (trading being ſo dead as it is, and is like to be) will ſcarce pay for the houſes they live in, and if ſo, wherewithall ſhall they and theirs ſubſiſt? Men muſt have meat to eat, and clothes to wear, as well houſes to dwell in; but your rack-Rents, and more than rack Fines, do eat the very bread out of their mouthes. When I think of the Fire, the Carters, the Pilferers, and you extorting Landlords, I cannot but recount, what is ſaid, *Joel* 1. 4. *That which the palmer-worm hath left, hath the locuſt eaten; and that which the locuſt hath left, hath the canker-worm eaten; and that which the canker-worm hath left, hath the caterpiller eaten.* How contrary have you been to Jeſus Chriſt, *who impoveriſhed himſelf to make others rich*, 2 Cor. 8. 9. whereas you have inricht your ſelves by making others poor. You have handled the poor City, as the *Sybils* are ſaid to have done their Prophecies, when they had burnt the greateſt part of them, asking as great a price for the Remains, as they did at firſt for the whole Book: what ever reaſon they had for that, I am ſure you have none for this.

Ruminate

Ruminate, I beſeech you, upon one Text I ſhall name to you, (with others of like nature) and then if you think fit to keep all the Fines you have taken, and to take all the Rent you have contracted for, give me leave to think, that your hearts do ſtand in no awe of Gods Word: The place I mean, is, *Zach.* 2. 9, 10, 11. *Woe to him that coveteth an evil covetouſneſs to his houſe, that he may ſet his neſt on high, that he may be delivered from the power of evil. Thou haſt conſulted ſhame to thy ſelf, thou haſt ſinned againſt thy ſoul; For the ſtone ſhall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber ſhall anſwer it.* If you will not believe, try at your peril, if that ſaying of Chriſt be not true, *viz.* that *It will profit a man nothing to gain the world and loſe his own ſoul.*

MEDITATION VII.

Upon the burning down of many Churches.

WHen men are better informed, and leſſe under the power of prejudice, they will not be offended, at calling thoſe places by the name of Churches, where people meet together for the publick worſhip and ſervice of God, though the living Temples of God, (or, the faithful meeting together for ſuch ends and purpoſes) are in greateſt ſtrictneſſe and propriety of ſpeech called, the Church, or ſome part of the Church of Chriſt, which is his Body, each Believer a member of it, and himſelf the Head. There is a Figure in Rhetorick (and ſuch as we can hardly ſpeak without) which puts things containing, for the things contained; and if the Holy Ghoſt himſelf do uſe that

Figure, I am sure we ought not to quarrel with it. I know not who can assure us, that the Scripture doth not speak by that Figure, when it saith, 1 *Cor.* 11. 22. *Have ye not Houses to eat and drink in, or despise ye the Church of God?* But not to contend about words, I look upon it as a great misery, that the places called by that name, are so generally demolished. He that shall look upon them, but as great ornaments to the places where they stood; or, as strong and stately buildings, that might have been employed to many good uses; or at most, but as places, where first and last, many fervent prayers have been offered to God, many religious assemblies have met together, many excellent and converting Sermons have been preached, if he be consistent with himself, cannot but bewail, that they are now made a ruinous heap. Most sober men do think, there were some good and useful lights, shining to the very last, in those Candlesticks; and for their sakes, I wish, (if the will of God had been so) that those Candlesticks might yet have stood; as also for the hope I had, that God in his good time, might have thrust forth many more faithful labourers into those Vineyards (if I may so call them.) Where now within the walls of that, sometimes famous City, can hundreds and thousands meet together, to reap the benefit of one and the same Sermon? I say, in how few places can it now be done (as formerly) with convenience and safety? We read of three thousand souls added to the Church, by one of *Peters* Sermons, *Acts* 2. 14. But, where now could a fifth part of that number with freedome and allowance converse together in order to such a purpose? How many idle persons are there like

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to be in fields and alehouses on the Lords day, under pretence they have no Churches to go to? What a vast charge and trouble will it be, to rebuild those Churches, or many of them, which, if ever *London* come to be it's self again, and Religion in any request (as God forbid it should be otherwise) must, and will be done. How forlorn would *London* have lookt, if all its Churches had been burnt, though all private houses had been yet standing? I dare not give those reasons, that some would do, why those Churches were burnt; I dare not say, we may do as well without them as with them. What reformed Church is there in the whole world, that hath not such places as those for publick worship, and that is not careful to maintain and uphold them? I wish every private house were a Church, (as *Paul Salutes the Church that was in their house, viz.* in the house of *Aquila* and *Priscilla*, Rom. 16. 5.) and yet I wish there were Churches every where besides those in private houses. What if the blind zeal of Papists did build many of those Churches, were they not converted to a better use? I think they could no more infuse evil into those places, than others can real and intrinsical holiness. The Censers of *Korah* and *Dathan* (howsoever they abused them) were not cast out of the Sanctuary, but made into *broad plates, as a covering for the Altar*, Numb. 16. 38. The destruction of Churches is pleasing to few men, but those who have outrun the sobriety of Religion, and, who have made such haste out of *Babylon*, that, (as one saith) they are run beyond *Jerusalem*. If some Ministers, by the fire of their passion, or other provoking sins, have helpt to burn the Churches, they did, or should

have preacht in over their heads; and if ſome, that were, or ſhould have been hearers, have done the like, the Lord forgive them, they know not what they have done. But may I, or mine (if God ſo pleaſe) live to ſee *London* rebuilt, Churches re-edified, by the zeal and piety of Proteſtants, every Congregation furniſhed with a faithful Paſtor, every Candleſtick filled with a burning and ſhining light, all divine Ordinances purely adminiſtred, all places for publick worſhip greatly and cheerfully frequented, all good Chriſtians united in the ſervice of God; then, though our new ſtructures ſhould never be ſo great and magnificent, as our old ones were, we ſhall eaſily acknowledge, that the glory of our ſecond Temples, is far greater than was that of our firſt.

MEDITATION VIII.

Upon the burning multitudes of Books of all ſorts.

WHat the Prophet ſpeaks in another caſe, *Habbak.* 3. 8. *Was the Lord diſpleaſed againſt the Rivers? Was thine anger againſt the Rivers? Was thy wrath againſt the Sea?* I may here allude to, and ſay, Was the Lord diſpleaſed againſt the Books? Was his anger againſt the famous Libraries that were burnt? I doubt not, but there were many Books amongſt them, fit for nothing but the fire, *viz.* wanton Poems, idle Romances, prophane Comedies, lying Legends, heretical Treatiſes, ſcandalous and pernicious Pamphlets, but were they all ſuch? It had then been a good riddance, and this fire had proved

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the best *Index Expurgatorius*, that ever was. But alas! Who knows not, that better Books were not extant in the whole World than were thousands of those, which this Fire consumed, and amongst the rest an innumerable company of Bibles, the best of Books. I can hardly forbear expostulating as *Abraham* did, *Gen.* 18. 3. Lord, *Wilt thou destroy the Righteous with the Wicked?* Thou didst do so in this case, and yet wert certainly righteous in what thou didst. Good Books are made for us, and for our sakes too, they were destroyed; they had not offended, but we: We by our sins, *make the whole Creation groan, and subject it to vanity.*

Who can sufficiently lament the poor Booksellers more generally undone, by this Fire, than any one sort of men? But Why? No man can tell, there being amongst them many honest and industrious men. But, O Lord, thy Judgements are unsearchable, and thy wayes past finding out: The greatest visible crime, wherewith I can charge them (and but some of them neither) was their printing, and selling some Books not fit to see the light: One *Jonas* disquieted and indangered all that were in the same ship, and one *Achan* trouble all *Israel*, and one *Leviathan* might mischief an Ocean of Books, as we read of the Creature so called, *Job.* 41. 31. *That he maketh the Sea to boil like a pot, he maketh the deep to boil like a pot of ointment.* Why did you set up *Dagon* by the Ark? Scripture and Anti-scripturisme did do ill together in one and the same Shop: Bibles at one end, and Atheisticall books at another: Books of Divinity in one corner of your Shops, and Books of Obscepity in another: What was this, but from the same

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Fountain to ſend forth bitter and ſweet? This was like gun-powder put amongſt other commodities, which hazards the blowing up of all the reſt. This might be the great provocation on your part, but, I doubt not, but the loſſe came as much for their ſakes, that were Buyers, as for yours that were Sellers of Books: for the ſakes of your Cuſtomers, (that either were, or ſhould have been) as much as for your own. Some wanted a heart to buy Books, though they could and ſhould have done it: others bought books enough, but wanted induſtry to peruſe them (and ſo anticipated others that would have read thoſe Books, if they had had them, or could have gotten them) Others both bought Books and read them, but did not too many do it, onely for oſtentation ſake, or out of curioſity (as deſirous to taſte the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge both of good and evill) with deſign meerly to inform, not to reform and amend themſelves thereby, or for other ſuch low, and ſiniſter ends? In all this we played the Wantons with our books, and Was it not juſt with God to take them from us, as Parents uſe to take the meat from off their Childrens trenchers, when they ſee, they eat out of meer wantonneſſe? Put to no better uſes, they would but have riſen up againſt us in the day, when the *Books mentioned*, Revelat. 20. 12. *Shall be opened, and the dead judged out of the things therein contained.*

But, whatſoever the particular cauſes of this Judgement were, ſure I am, the loſſe of ſo many excellent books, was a great blow, both to Religion and Learning. We loſt a far greater treaſure in their worth, than in their price, though that alſo amounted to a very great ſum, far ſurpaſſing

passing the price of those *Books of curious Arts*, spoken of, *Act.* 19. 19. *Which those that believed are said to have burnt, though they reckoned them worth fifty thousand pieces of silver.* Alas! What was that to four times fifty thousand pieces of Gold, which some have judged this losse to amount unto? Who seeth not, by this instance, that Books are of a perishing nature, as well as other things; he, that, by means thereof, would raise to himself a lasting monument, may fail of his end. He spake like a vapouring Poet, that said, *Famque opus exegi quod nec* Jovis *ira nec ignes, nec poterunt flammæ nec edax abolere vetustas.* I doubt not but many of those Poems of his were at this time metamorphosed into flames; and, by the same reason, all may be one time or other. Books worth a thousand of that suffered in the same flames, and yet, I think, their sufferings not to have been the same; as is usually said, *Cum duo faciunt idem, non est idem*; so, *Cum duo patiuntur idem, non est idem*, is as true. Good books burnt like Martyrs, Bad ones like Malefactours: the former ascended up to Heaven, like sweet Incense: the latter like the smoke of the Bottomless pit. As some waters run by each other, and yet mix not, so in a morall sense may we judge of these flames, which consumed the good Books, and the bad ones.

Were it not in vain to wish for a resurrection of Books, How should I long to see it? Oh that at least our forty thousand Bibles might be recovered again, though all the other books were irrecoverably lost; the next Age may be for books, though this be all for News. But since, *à privatione ad habitum non datur regressus* (in this as in some other cases) since we can never look for them

them again; let us remember the Italian proverb, which saith, *Deliver us from that man that reads but one book* (intimating, that he, that doth so, is like to be too hard for any man, in defending the principles of that one Author) and be thence encouraged to read those few books that are left us over and over, so shall we find *dimidium plus toto* to be verified in this case, a part, so improved, will do us more good, than the whole had wont to do, as one dish, well fed upon, refresheth us more than twenty, that do but glut us with the sight and sent of them. Let us take occasion from this, to acquaint our selves more then ever, with those four Books, which are of more consequence than all the rest, *viz.* The Book of Creation, Providence, Scripture, and that of our own Hearts and Consciences. The multitude of our other Books may have impeded us from looking, so much as we ought, into these; and now they are diminished, let us more then ever delight ourselves in these, and meditate therein day and night. If thou didst make an Idol of thy books (as some men did) and dost now mourn, for the loss of them, as *Micha* did for the taking away of his gods (*Judges* 18. 24.) Consider, that the best of knowledge (and that the Scripture is sufficient to instruct thee in) is that, Saint *John* speaks of, *John* 17. 3. *This is Life eternal, that they might know thee, the onely true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.*

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MEDITATION IX.

Upon the burning of the Royall Exchange.

IT is but a few moneths ago, that one, who had never seen the *Royall Exchange* before, would have beheld the glory of it with admiration; as one, or more of the Disciples of Christ, did the Temple of *Jerusalem*, *Matth.* 13. 1. saying, *See what manner of stones and what manner of buildings are here*: But, behold, that which Christ spake of the Temple, saying, *Seest thou these great buildings? There shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down*, is already almost fulfilled in, and upon that stately Pile, the destruction whereof, we little dream't to have been so near at hand. Some stones there are yet standing one upon another, but so, as that they must be taken down, and had they fallen, without breaking themselves, it had but saved a labour: What a princely foundation was that *Royal Exchange*? and of how great use? Was not that the Center in which those lines met, that were drawn from all parts of *Europe*? rich Merchants, I mean, and other eminent Tradesmen and great Dealers, not onely English, but Spanish, French, Dutch, Portugueze, Danes, Swedes. Was not the place a little Epitomie, or rather Representative of all *Europe* (if not of the greatest part of the trading World) renewed every day at such a time, and for so many hours? As *London* was the glory of *England*, so was that *Royal Exchange* one of the greatest Glories and Ornaments of *London*. There were the Statues of the Kings and Queens

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of *England* set up, as in the most conspicuous and honourable place (as well receiving lustre from the place where they stood, as giving lustre to it.)

How full of Riches was that *Royall Exchange*? Rich men in the midst of it, rich goods both above and beneath. There men walk't upon the top of a Wealthy Mine; considering, what Eastern Treasures, costly spices, and such like things were laid up in the bowels (I mean the Cellars) of that Place. As for the upper part of it, Was it not the great Storehouse, whence the Nobility and Gentry of *England* were furnished with most of those costly things, wherewith they did adorn either their Closets or themselves? Here, if any where, might a man have seen the glory of the world in a moment, as the Devil shewed it to Christ from a high mountain: What artificiall thing could entertain the senses and fantasies of men, that was not there to be had? Such was the delight that many Gallants took in that Magazine of all curious varieties, that they could almost have dwelt there (going from Shop to Shop, like Bees from flower to flower) If they had but had a Fountain of Money that could not have been drawn dry. I doubt not but a Mahometan (who never expects other than sensible delights) would gladly have accepted of that place, and the treasures of it for his heaven, and have thought there were none like it. About the space of nineteen months was that *Royall Exchange* in building, *viz.* from *June* 7th. til *November* in the year following: So that the Sunne had finished his annual course once, and almost a second time, ere that work was finished: but was it so many hours in burning,

ning, as it was months in building?

How obnoxious are all earthly things to destruction? How easily are the works of our hands brought to nought? How little a time will serve to ruine those things, that did require a long time to raise them? I finde this noble Structure had stood about a hundred years before Destruction overtook it: for it is said to have been erected in the year 1566, and the time of its conflagration, we know too well, to have been 1666. One sixty six built it, another sixty six burnt it; so one *Philip* founded the Macedonian Empire, another *Philip* ruined it; one *Constantine* built *Constantinople*, and another of that Name lost it; an *Augustus* was the first established Emperor of *Rome*, and another *Augustus* the last. So many times the World goes round like a Circle, where it begins, there it ends. Did that Structure come down in a day or lesse, which had continued a hundred years, and might in all probability have lasted one Century more? I see then there may be more in the womb of one day or night, than was in the womb of a hundred years before, and the law of providence may, in a few hours over-rule the prescription of a whole Age. Though the destruction of Places, and so of Persons set out late, yet, when it once sets out, it may ride post, and come, as upon the wings of the wind. *He that, being often reproved, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed,* Prov. 29. 1. The sins of that place had deserv'd this judgment sooner: but he that bore with the old World, one hundred and twenty years, after warning given, bore with it towards an hundred, though the provocations thereof were great. As nature hath placed the weightiest things below, and lighter things above them

them (as Air above Earth); so the more solid persons and parlyes (as well as the more bulky Commodities) had wont to be in the lower Rooms of that Exchange, where Merchants met to discourse their affairs. The sins of that lower part, we may suspect, to have been craft and covetousnesse, over-reaching and going beyond one another. Many did not so because of the fear of the Lord; (as *Nehemiah* said of himself, *Neh.* 9. 5. *So did not I, because of the fear of God*) but others did. And were there not other kinds of sin, which did abound in the upper Region of that Exchange, which, like so many Comets or blazing Stars, did portend or threaten the destruction of it. Oh the pride and prodigality that was there to be seen? How few could be charitable, that were so expensive as many were in that place? And how much of that which was there expended, might well have been put to charitable uses? How unlikely was it, that they should be humble, who were so curious and phantastical, as the things that were there bought, shewed them to be? They that wrought to that place, had need of as good a phantasie for Metamorpholis in Habits, as *Ovid* had in other Things, that they might please customers so insatiable after novelties.

So fell that noble structure, undermined by craft and covetousnesse, and over-laden with pride and prodigality above, and great was the fall thereof. Though there was in that place an Insurance-Office, which undertook for those Ships and Goods that were hazarded at Sea, either by boisterous winds or dangerous enemies: yet could it not secure it self, when sin, like *Sampson*, took hold of the pillars of it, and went about to pull it down.

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What quick work can sin and fire make? How did that strong Building vanish of a sudden, as if it had been but an Apparition? How quickly was it taken down, as if it had been but a sleight Tent, the Cords whereof are presently loosened, and the Stakes soon removed? Oh that some *Jonas* might have been sent, to tell us, that within so many days that Exchange should be burnt down, if we repented not. Oh that howsoever, a timely repentance might have prevented those ruins; that we had commuted for our Exchange, by parting with our sins. But since it lies in ashes, and there is no prevention of it, oh that we may not so much lament the burning of our Exchange, as the sins that burnt it. May the minds of men, by this sad Providence, be disposed to use another Exchange, for onely honest Merchandise; and the minds, both of men and women, to use the upper part of it no more as a Nursery of pride, but, in order to putting them and theirs, into a decent equipage, befitting their respective qualities; and then may they live to see another Structure in the same place, not inferiour to the first, and that *Royal Burse*, or *Purse* (which is now a meer *Vacuum*) as well filled as ever it was before; and after that, if the Will of God be so, may it never perish (at least wise by fire) more, till the Conflagration of all things.

MEDITATION X.

Upon the burning of Hospitals, and Rents thereunto belonging.

RIghteous art thou O Lord, yet let me plead with thee concerning thy Judgments. Why had the fire a Commission to burn down Hospitals? Why didst thou dry up those pools of *Bethesdah*? Why didst thou wither the Goards of those poor *Jonas*'s, who had nothing else to defend them from the scorching of extream poverty? Was ever money given to better uses, or with a better intent, than what went to the maintaining those houses of Charity? Or was it ever intrusted in better and safer hands, than that which had so many persons of worth and integrity to take care of it, (and be, as it were, Overseers of the poor)? Or what charity was ever disposed of more according to the will of the Doners, than that hath always been, which few or none would accept, but those that had need of it (and for them it was intended)? I should have thought, the Doors of those houses, above all others, would have been sprinkled, that the destroying Angel might have passed over them, and that Judgment should not have entered, where onely Mercy did seem to dwell. Did not Christ say, *The poor we have always with us*, and shall we have no Receptacles for the poor? The poor increase daily, but the places of their relief are diminished; and where those places are yet standing, yet is not much of their Revenue impaired? Shall the Foxes have holes, and the Birds of the Aire nests, but the poor not have where to lay their heads? Came this for their sakes, whose charity

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did maintain theſe places, or for thoſe that were maintained in them and by them, or for the ſake of others; or for all the three? Whileſt ſome contributed to thoſe places out of pure ends and principles, might not others do it out of ſuperſtition and conceipt of merit, others out of Oſtentation? (though we may not impute thoſe things to any in particular): And as for thoſe who were relieved in thoſe places, were there not ſins amongſt them alſo? Some, it may be, were not more poor than wicked; ſo, that though their poverty made them the Objects of Mercy from men, yet their wickedneſs expoſed them to the Juſtice of God.

Doubtleſs, men by ſin, may forfeit, not only their ſuperfluities and conveniencies, but alſo their very neceſſaries, or ſuch things as they cannot live without: and had not too many of theſe ſo done? Though ſome, whoſe miſeries have brought them to ſuch places, are affected with the hand of God, and fear to ſin whileſt his rod is upon them; yet, were there not others, who no whit appalled by all their ſufferings (were it the loſs of limbs or whatſoever elſe) would ſwear, and drink, and rant, at ſuch a rate, as if they had had all the world before them, or thought ſcorn, that as to theſe things, even the greateſt perſonages ſhould go beyond them. Had all been ſuch as ſome were, poſſibly the Great God had not forborn to ſet fire upon thoſe Houſes long ago. But in relation to others, might not this come, Firſt, to try their ſincerity, whether their hearts would ſerve them to give to good uſes, though by this it appears, they can have no aſſurance of raiſing any laſting monument to their names thereby. Or, Secondly, to try their Faith, whether they would caſt their bread, as upon the

water, ſo upon the fire, as it were, (or that which may eaſily be burnt) in hope to find it after many dayes. But the probableſt reaſon of all is, that it came to prove and exerciſe their Charity, and to call upon them (ſo many as are able) to *make to themſelves friends of the Mammon of unrighteouſneſs, that when they fail, they may be received into everlaſting habitations.* Why ſhould the poor be alwayes maintained by an old ſtock of Charity? Why ſhould not this Age be as charitable as former Ages were? Though many be poor at this time, yet all are not, yea, there are many rich, though not comparative to the number of ſuch as are poor, nor have rich men ever more to do, than when there are moſt poor. Poor men think it a bleſſed thing to receive; but Chriſt hath told them, It is yet a more bleſſed thing to give. The Italians when they begge, uſe to ſay to them of whom they begge, Pray be good to your ſelves.

As much as iniquity doth abound, I will not believe, unleſſe I ſee it, that Charity is grown ſo cold, that amongſt all the rich men that are in *England*, Nobles, Gentlemen, and others, there will not be found enough to repair that breach which the fire hath made upon the poor Hoſpitals, and the revenues, formerly belonging to them. You know, (or, if I thought you did not, I can tell you) where and whence you may defaulk enough to rear up thoſe Structures again as large and fair as before, (though one of them was ſometimes the Pallace of a Prince, even *Bridewell* it's ſelf) and to indow them as liberally as ever, and not to miſſe what you have parted with, when you have done. Think how much extraordinary it uſeth to coſt you every year upon your luſts, one or more.

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One mans Drunkenneſſe coſts him an hundred pounds in a year extraordinary, another mans Uncleanneſſe twice ſo much, a third mans Gameing no leſſe, and ſo it is like to do from year to year: Yea poſſibly ſome men have ſpent, as much of their time upon one luſt, as would have built an Hoſpitall. Now as God ſaith, that he *would famiſh all the gods of the Heathen*; ſo do you famiſh thoſe luſts which you have idolized, cut off thoſe right hands, that they may graſp no more of your money, for time to come, and let the poor receive it in their ſtead. Is it not better lending to the Lord, than giving to the Devil? Why will you buy repentance ſo dear, when you might put your money to ſo much better uſes? Some that have fallen into very hainous ſins, have built Hoſpitals, for the relief of their own Conſciences.

God may pleaſe to leave you to the ſame ſins, and ſo extort that out of you, by the ſame means, if it will not come freely. Some, though free from notorious vices, yet do manifeſtly exceed in diet, and in apparel. What if you ſhould leſſen your Table by one or two diſhes every day? What if you ſhould ſpare ſomething of that ſuperfluous coſt, which you uſe to give yourſelves in every garment; and reſolving ſo to do, ſhould contribute all that, to the rebuilding and reindowing the conſumed Hoſpitals, which, you reckon, that good husbandry would ſave you every year: What if Gentlemen ſhould keep fewer hounds and hawks, or none at all, in order to ſo good a work? Yea, What if you ſhould put two horſes leſſe into your Coaches, which had wont to be drawn with four or ſix? You may think yourſelves at liberty in

this case, but pardon me, if I think you are bound. It is not matter of choice, but duty, to minister to the necessities of others, out of our superfluities, and to their extremities, out of our very conveniences. He, that is unmercifull or uncharitable, is also unjust, because he doth not use the talent, wherewith his Lord hath intrusted him, for those ends for which it was put into his hands: He doth not fulfill the just will of the Donor: Let it never be said, that God gave you Estates to do good with, but you spent them upon your lusts, that you can find so many pounds, or hundreds of pounds, to consume in Taverns and Tippling-houses, so much treasure wherewith to keep Mistresses (otherwise called whores) so much gold and silver, wherewith *to treasure up to yourselves wrath against the day of wrath*, but nothing, wherewithal to rebuild, or help forward the rebuilding of ruinated Hospitals.

Break off your sins, by repentance, and your iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor, as *Daniel* said to *Nebuchadnezzar*. All the good you do sincerely will be your own another day: Therefore said *Paul*, Phil. 4. 17. *I desire fruit that may abound to your account*. The same Apostle, speaking of the Churches of *Macedonia*, saith, *That their deep poverty had abounded to the riches of their liberality*, 2 *Cor.* 8. 2. and, Shall not your riches amount to as much as did their poverty? *Christ became poor to make us rich*: and, Shall we think much to be somewhat lesse rich, that we may relieve those that are extreamly poor? Look not to receive that joyfull Sentence from Christ, *Come ye blessed, &c.* unlesse he may say of you, *For you saw me hungry and fed me; naked, and clothed me*, meaning his Members, which are himself, mystically; (so

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the Church is called Christ.) Let not the ashes of, sometimes greatly usefull, Hospitals cry to Heaven, against your want of bowels, *He that hath this worlds goods, and shutteth up his bowels against those that are in want, How dwelleth the love of God in him?* The worse uses, that any have formerly put their money to, the greater obligation lies upon them to put it to good uses (as they are called) for time to come. Not onely the ill getting of money calls for extraordinary charity (which made *Zaccheus* say, *The one half of my Estate I give to the poor*) but also, our having ill spent it, in times past; for it is with money as with time, by how much the worse we spent it formerly, by so much the better, we should spend it for the future. Princes have laid these foundations, and will it not be an honour, for Subjects to build upon them? your work may possibly stand hundreds of years (as some of those houses, yet in being, have done) whereas theirs is fallen to the ground. In a word, next unto the honor of building a Temple for Gods house (as *Solomon* did, and *David* was ambitious to have done) is that of building a house for Gods Temples, and such are all true believers, how poor and mean soever.

MEDITATION XI.

Upon the Burning of Publick Halls.

If any think those Halls were built meerly for feasting and entertainment (or at the most but for pompe) they are much deceived. Certainly, they were both intended and improved to higher

and better uſes. All great Bodies and Societies of men muſt needs, for order ſake, be divided and ſubdivided. So Armies are divided into ſeveral Regiments; Regiments, into ſeveral Troopes or Companies: ſo Navies divide themſelves into ſeveral Squadrons. Upon the ſame accompt, the Citizens of *London*, being a great Body of Traders, and thoſe of ſeverall Profeſſions; it was but neceſſary, they ſhould be parcelled into ſeveral Companies, having each of them their peculiar Officers, which made them as it were an entire body by themſelves, fitted with head and members of all ſorts, the reſpective Maſters being, as it were, the head, the ſubordinate Officers, the Eſſential parts, and the ordinary members the integral. Both decency and conveniency required, there ſhould be a handſome place, for each of thoſe Societies to meet in; which was, as it were, a little Parliament Houſe belonging to them, in which the Repreſentatives of each Company (I mean their Officers) did meet together to conſult and Parley, what might be for the good of the whole. Here the grievances of each Society (falling within their cognizance) where complained of and redreſſed. Here they adviſed and agreed together what to do, and what to petition their Superiors for, that might be for the benefit of their reſpective trades and Profeſſions, how they might prevent encroachments and abuſes, how they might maintain their priviledges, how they might take all advantages, for the beſt improvement of their reſpective Trades. In all of theſe a common ſtock was kept on foot, and carefully lookt after, for divers needful purpoſes; as namely, for the relief of ſuch of their own Society, as

ſhould

ſhould fall to decay, for helping young beginners, who had little to ſet up with, and might there borrow upon good ſecurity, for improving the Eſtates of Widowes (as in the Book-ſellers Company) and for many other good purpoſes; one of which, Schollars ought never to forget, and that is for encouraging young Students, by liberall exhibitions wherewith to increaſe their maintainance at the Univerſity. There were in ſeverall Halls, though not in each of them, Stocks going for all theſe purpoſes (and it is like for many more, which may ſufficiently evidence, that they were places of great uſe; which, I mention to ſhew, what cauſe we have to bewail the loſſe of them. To ſay, they were moſt of them noble Structures, even thoſe that did belong to the meaner Trades (as, who ſhould ſay, they aſſumed ſome grandeur to themſelves, as they were a Society, whatſoever their condition might be ſingly and apart) Or, to ſay, that the meeting together, of the members of thoſe Companies, in their ſeverall Halls, upon many great ſolemnities, was a probable means to increaſe love and friendſhip amongſt them, were to deſcend to lower conſiderations about them, then I have yet taken notice of (and yet thoſe things are not altogether contemptible) and therefore I ſcarce care to mention them. But put all I have ſaid, together (though poſſibly I know not half the uſes they were put to) it will appear a doleful thing, that they were burnt, and that, in their deſtruction, we loſt, not onely great Splendor, but great conveniences, helps, and advantages, and that in ſeveral kinds. If men did there decree righteous things amongſt themſelves (as I hope they did)

I know no Crime those places were chargeable with, unless it were too much Feasting: which, the sadness of Times, for many years past, might put an aggravation upon: And, if that were all their Crime, I see, how necessary it is, to shun, not only greater, but also lesser sins, which may expose Places; and, if Places, Why not Persons also to ruin and destruction.

One Hall there was of something a different use from the rest, and of greater spendor, *Guild-Hall* I mean; in which, one *Author* tells me, no less than nine several Courts had wont to be kept; whereof, one was called, *The Court of Conscience*: If any of the rest did not deserve the same name, (which I cannot charge:) those, or that which did not, should be lookt upon as the *Acan*'s, which troubled that place, and brought a curse upon it. *One sinner destroyeth much good*, saith *Solomon*, Eccles. 9.18. What then may not an unrighteous Court do, which consists of many sinners? When I consider the Largeness, the Strength, and yet the Antiquity, the Majesty, and the daily-Usefulness of that same *Guild-Hall*, methinks it is not enough to weep over the Ruines of it: As firm as it stood, it was founded no less than upward of 360 years agoe; and, to see it confounded, (as I may call it) in one day, Whose heart would it not cause to bleed? Other Halls were like Parliament-Houses, to particular Companies; but this, to the whole City: where the Assembling together of the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Common-Councill, had some resemblance of a King, Lords, and Commons. There seemed to be an awfulness in the very place; methinks it had a Majestick look with it; and such, as made the Magistrates there convened (though very

ry venerable in themselves) yet something more considerable than they would have appeared elsewhere. It was surely that place, which did more contribute to make *London* look like it self (that is, like the Head-City of these three Kingdomes) than any one Structure thereunto belonging. *London* had not been its self, if it had lost nothing but that one Hall: I wonder, That all the Wise Heads, that were concerned in it, could not save that stately Hall, (our *English* Capitol, as I may call it) from burning: Methinks it speaks our Provocations-high, that we have sinned away so great an Ornament, so vast an Accommodation as that Hall was; and, to think, that almost all the rest are gone with it, might make our *joynts tremble*, and our *knees smite together*, as *Belshazzar*'s did, when he saw the *hand-writing upon the wall*. I see there is no building certainly durable, but that, which *Paul* speaks of, 2 *Cor.* 5. 1. and, Lord, let that be mine (as well as his,) *That building of God, that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.*

MEDITATION XII.

Of the Burning of Publick Schools, as Pauls *School, and others.*

IS Learning taking it's leave of *England*? Is that Sun about to set in our Horizon? that Schollars have received two such terrible blows? Young ones have lost their Schools; and, both young and old have lost their Books: Nevertheless, for ever Renowned be Reverend Doctor *Colet*, and the rest of the Founders and Benefactors of all those noble Free-Schools that now lie in the dust: I say, Let

their

their Memory be ever precious, though their Gift hath not continued so long, as they and we did hope it might. Yet, the youngest of the three Publick Schools, that are now demolished (*viz.* that which was founded by the *Merchant-Taylors*) had lasted above a hundred years; and the eldest of the three. (*viz. Paul's*) half as long again, and many Centuries more they might have stood, had not this fire brought them to an untimely end. I cannot but muse to what a plunge Parents are now put, to get good Schools for their Children, (especially those, who cannot endure their Children should live at a distance from them) considering, that honest and able School-masters are but here and there to be found. A good School-master must, in the first place, be a good man: It is to a wonder what notice Children will take of their Master's Religion, and what a lasting impression that will make upon them; and how apt they are to take after them, because of the veneration they have for them. If their Masters be profane, they think they have leave to be so, and should not take upon them to be more religious than they. A Master must consider, that his Scholars have souls to save, as well as minds to inform; and he is not to be trusted with Youth that will not consider it. Nextly, A good Master must be a good Scholar, (at least wise for some kind of Learning) a good Grammarian, a good Linguist; and one, that is not only so himself, but also able to make others such, that is, one that knows how, in an easie and familiar way, to communicate Knowledge to Children, to make hard things plain, &c. He must be διδακτικὸς (as the Apostle saith, a Minister should be) that is, *Apt to teach*.

Again,

Again, A good Master must be a wise man, no antick, no mimmick (as too many are, which hath made the word *Pedant* and *Pedantical* to sound very ridiculously, though the work of a good School-master be very honourable). Wise he ought to be, that he may set his Scholars the Example of a wise behavior, and teach Children to carry themselves like Men; whereas, some seem to learn of their Scholars to carry themselves like Children, that is, Conceiptedly, Humorsomely, Phantastically. It requires no small Wisedom, to judge of the different parts and tempers of Children, where their excellency lies, whether in Memory, or Invention, or otherwise, that they may put them upon those pieces of Learning, in which they are like most of all to excell: and whilest they find them to have an excellency in one kind, work upon that, and bear with their defects in another kind. He may have a great Memory, that hath but mean Fancy; he may be long in retaining, who is slow in getting things into his memory; one can make his exercise of a sudden, as well as if he had more time; another can do nothing of a sudden, but, give him time enough, and he will perform it excellently, and better than he that was quick at it.

How many Masters commit great errors, for want of being able to judge of these things, like unskilful Riders, that either think a horse good for nothing because he cannot amble well, though he have an excellent and an easie trot; or keep him wholly to his pace, though he do but shuffle at it, and can never be made to do otherwise: whereas he would trot as fast as could be desired, and as well as any horse can do, if they would but give him

him leave. The Scholar's Scholar-craft, (as I may call it) in humoring his humorsome Master: the Parent's great bounty to the Master, and his great affection to such his Scholars, upon those two accounts, makes too many partial and injudicious Masters, Cry up the pregnancy of those Scholars that little deserve it, and so *vice versâ*. And ought not Masters to be wise therefore also, that they may be able to judge of the disposition of their Scholars, whether fair means or fowl is like to do most good upon them, whether fear or shame will most prevail with them, whether emulation or correction will most spur them on. A word or two will do more with some Children, than many blows with others; where Balsomes will serve the turn, it is folly to apply Caustick and Corrosives, which, it is to be feared, some Masters do for want of judgment. Moreover, wise and sage Admonitions are of great use to Children; and therefore, it is needful, their Master should be a wise man, that he may be able to dispense them Let me add, A Master had need be furnished with Wisedom, to govern and conceal his own weak humors and passions (as there are many that abound with such) for that the discovery thereof, is like *Noah*'s uncovering his nakedness, in the sight of his Children, which exposed him to their contempt, and made some of them to sin: And Masters that give way to such humors, are like unsound Nurses that give suck, who make the Children that draw their Breasts as unwholsome as themselves, and fill them, as they say, with evil humours. I might add, That a Master should be no conceited man, not one that thinks himself a good Philosopher, because he is a good Philologer; or

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the wisest man in the Nation, because he is the wisest person in the School: He that is a Man amongst Children, may be but a Child amongst Men. I had not mentioned this, but that I have observed some School-masters, to have brought an ill report, both upon themselves and their Profession, by seeming as wise in their own eyes, as they could be in the eyes of their boyes, who oftimes think, that no man knows so much as doth their Master, as if they were proud of that high opinion, which their Scholars have of them, and did rest in the judgment of Children (who scarce know the right hand from the left,) as if it were infallible.

Lastly, To say nothing of that diligence and laboriousness that ought to be in School-masters, I shall only add, that they ought not to be either too milde or severe; neither like that Beam, which *Jupiter* (as it is in the Fable) gave to the Frogs for their King: Which alwayes lying still, when they were used to it a while, they leapt and plaid upon it: Nor yet like that Stork, which was afterwards sent amongst them, when they desired a more active Prince, whose cruelty made them wish for their Beam again. He, that is over-mild, is like to do little good upon some children: but, he that is over-harsh, may do a great deal of hurt. I read, *Acts* 19. 9. of the *School of one Tyrannus*: I wish there were no more Schools that did deserve the same name. We hear but of one Tyrannical Emperor that became a School-master before he died; but, Are there not many School-masters that domineer, and exercise severity like Tyrannical Emperors, or Imperial Tyrants? Now, if the character I have given of a good School-master be a Digression; yet, it may prove a useful one, if

Parents

him leave. The Scholar's Scholar-craft, (as I may call it) in humoring his humorsome Master: the Parent's great bounty to the Master, and his great affection to such his Scholars, upon those two accounts, makes too many partial and injudicious Masters, Cry up the pregnancy of those Scholars that little deserve it, and so *vice versâ*. And ought not Masters to be wise therefore also, that they may be able to judge of the disposition of their Scholars, whether fair means or fowl is like to do most good upon them, whether fear or shame will most prevail with them, whether emulation or correction will most spur them on. A word or two will do more with some Children, than many blows with others; where Balsomes will serve the turn, it is folly to apply Causticks and Corrosives, which, it is to be feared, some Masters do for want of judgment. Moreover, wise and sage Admonitions are of great use to Children; and therefore, it is needful, their Master should be a wise man, that he may be able to dispense them Let me add, A Master had need be furnished with Wisedom, to govern and conceal his own weak humors and passions (as there are many that abound with such) for that the discovery thereof, is like *Noah*'s uncovering his nakedness, in the sight of his Children, which exposed him to their contempt, and made some of them to sin: And Masters that give way to such humors, are like unsound Nurses that give sack, who make the Children that draw their Breasts as unwholsome as themselves, and fill them, as they say, with evil humours. I might add, That a Master should be no conceited man, not one that thinks himself a good Philosopher, because he is a good Philologer; or

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the wiſeſt man in the Nation, becauſe he is the wiſeſt perſon in the School: He that is a Man amongſt Children, may be but a Child amongſt Men. I had not mentioned this, but that I have obſerved ſome School-maſters, to have brought an ill report, both upon themſelves and their Profeſſion, by ſeeming as wiſe in their own eyes, as they could be in the eyes of their boyes, who oftimes think, that no man knows ſo much as doth their Maſter, as if they were proud of that high opinion, which their Scholars have of them, and did reſt in the judgment of Children (who ſcarce know the right hand from the left,) as if it were infallible.

Laſtly, To ſay nothing of that diligence and laborioufneſs that ought to be in School-maſters, I ſhall only add, that they ought not to be either too milde or ſevere; neither like that Beam, which *Jupiter* (as it is in the Fable) gave to the Frogs for their King: Which alwayes lying ſtill, when they were uſed to it a while, they leapt and plaid upon it: Nor yet like that Stork, which was afterwards ſent amongſt them, when they deſired a more active Prince, whoſe cruelty made them wiſh for their Beam again. He, that is over-mild, is like to do little good upon ſome children: but, he that is over-harſh, may do a great deal of hurt. I read, *Acts* 19. 9. of the *School of one Tyrannus*: I wiſh there were no more Schools that did deſerve the ſame name. We hear but of one Tyrannical Emperor that became a School-maſter before he died; but, Are there not many School-maſters that domineer, and exerciſe ſeverity like Tyrannical Emperors, or Imperial Tyrants? Now, if the character I have given of a good School-maſter be a Digreſſion; yet, it may prove a uſeful one, if

Parents

Parents will thereby be directed in the choice of Masters for their Children, or Masters that are guilty of any of the forementioned faults, would thereby be prevailed with to amend.

But possibly, what I have said about School-masters, is no Digression, considering, that if those Masters that were fired out of *London*, were men of such a good Character, as I have given of a good School-master, it informeth us what cause we have to bewail the losse of them, and of those Schools which might have invited and incouraged a succession of such worthy Masters as themselves. This poor Lads little lay to heart (as being ignorant of what is for their good); yea possibly, what through dread of their Masters, disaffection to their Books, and love of their Play, they are even glad their Schools are burnt; so incident it is to humane nature, to rejoyce in any little good to it's self: yea, to wish for it, though it be brought to passe by unspeakably more hurt and prejudice to others; being glad, when their own eggs are roasted, though it be by that fire, that consumes the houses of other men. Yet I wonder not, at the evil that proceeds from degenerate men, much lesse from Children: but, O Lord, I rather wonder at Thy self, Why thou didst suffer the Foxes to spoil those Vines (the Fire, I mean, which came like *Samson*'s Foxes, with fire-brands in their Tails, consuming those Noble Schools, as they did the *Philistim*'s Corn,) considering, that *those Vines had tender Grapes*, Cant. 2. 15. But I would answer my self with this: Schools had their sins as well as other places, which were more and greater than a Master's rod could punish. Yea, Masters themselves had deserved Correction, and who but Thy

self

ſelf ſhould give it them? But oh that theſe uſeful Structures might not alwayes lie in the duſt, but that Piety and Charity might rebuild what Sin hath pull'd down. Doubtleſſe, this Age hath many men in it, as able to build Free-Schools, as Reverend *Colet*, and ſome other Founders were; and why ſhould they not be as willing. If Parents want good Schools for their Children, they will hardly come to any thing whilſt they live: (For, the errors of the firſt Concoction, as Phylicians obſerve, cannot be corrected by the ſecond or third). Schools, like Stomachs, make the firſt Digeſtion, which if naught, will ſpoil all the reſt. Let me conjure men of Eſtates, eſpecially thoſe that have no Children, or if Children ſuch as are unworthy, I ſay, let me conjure you, by the regard you have to the honour of God, to the renown of the Engliſh Nation, to the increaſe of Knowledge, to the happineſſe of Church and State, (the chief Officers and Miniſters whereof, uſe to receive their firſt rudiments and ſeaſoning in publick Schools) liberally to contribute to the re-building of thoſe noble Schools, which the late fire hath deprived us of; yea, do it yourſelves, as ſome have done before you, if you have wherewithall: And when that is done, ſet up your Statues by thoſe of the ancient Founders, and appear together like *Caſtor* and *Pollux* at Sea, which is accounted an Omen of good. Take your choice of four ſorts of good works, which may beſt ſuit with your tempers. If you are ſevere *Cato*'s, help to re-build *Bridewell*, where naughty Perſons may receive Correction, and be made to work: If you are devoted to the Service of God, help to re-edifie Churches: If to works of Mercy, contribute towards the

raising up of demolished Hospitals: But, if you are friends to Learning, and to all the other three, do what in you lieth, to restore Publick-schools to their former glory; in which, Vice may be corrected, Mercy shewed to poor mens Children, and Religion promoted, by preparing Youth, to be, in time, serviceable to the Church.

MEDITATION XIII.

Upon the Burning of Tombs, and Graves, and dead Bodies that were buried therein.

WHere is rest to be had, either for the quick or dead, in this World? where may men be quiet and secure, if they cannot be so in their very Graves? One would have thought, nothing would have pluckt them from the horns of that Altar; But, the fire hath done it; That fire, which robb'd the Spittles, Hath it not also robb'd the Worms, and taken the meat out of their mouths? We expected, those Bodies would have turned Worms-meat and dust; but, instead thereof, they are burnt to ashes. So *Job*, speaking of the grave, *Job.* 3. 17. *There the weary are at rest*: So they are in one sense, but not alwayes so in another. The righteous mans grave is called his bed, *Isa.* 57. 2. *They shall rest in their beds.* How many dead bodies then were burnt in their beds? and, so might many living ones have been, if God had not been more merciful. Now, the fire hath turned many dead bodies to ashes: could those ashes (as some others) be made into glasse, which, they say, is the last resolution that bodies can undergo (*Vitrificatio est ultima resolutio*;) yet would the Resurrection find them

them out, and not loſe one grain belonging to them. We read, that *Abſalom* had reared up a Pillar, or ſtately Sepulchre for himſelf, to preſerve his name, becauſe he had no children; but, it went by the name of *Abſalom's* Place, or empty-Monument (Κενοτάφιον) as *Tremellius* renders it in the Margint; becauſe he never (for ought we read) came to lie in it, but *was buried in a pit in a wood, with a heap of ſtones caſt upon him*, 2 Sam. 18. 18. So, in that great City, there were many that had provided noble burying-places for themſelves, againſt the time they ſhould be gathered to their fathers; yea, and they were poſſeſſed of them, (which *Abſalom* never was of his:) but, How ſhort a time had ſome of their bodies lain in thoſe coſtly Sepulchres, before the fire came and turned them out of poſſeſſion; or rather deſtroyed both their Carcaſſes and their ſtately Monuments!

I ſee, how vain a thing it is, for men to have their Names, and Titles, and Encomiums, graven upon Marble-Stones in Golden Letters, and ſet up in Churches: How eaſily they may be deceived, that think, with *Abſalom*, out of thoſe ſtones, to raiſe up to themſelves (I cannot ſay children) but a Memorial in lieu of Children. Every body will not believe all the Epitaphs they find inſcribed upon thoſe Monuments-Stones can lie and not bluſh: But, beſides that, if men were prone to believe all they read upon Tombs and Monuments, How ſoon may thoſe Characters be ſo defaced and obliterated, as that they cannot be read? And, look how *Abſalom* was buried under a heap of ſtones, in ſtead of being laid in that ſtately Pillar, or Pyramid, which he had built for that purpoſe: So, are not many at this day covered, but as it were

with a heap of ſtones, who had provided themſelves of ſtately Sepulchres; thoſe Sepulchres of theirs being by the fire converted, but into a rude and formleſs heaps of ſtones: She erected a more durable Monument for her ſelf, who did but *pour out a box of precious ointment upon the head of Chriſt*, Matt. 26.17. for, Chriſt hath ſaid, *Wheresoever the Goſpel ſhall be preached in the whole world, there ſhall this be told for a memorial of her.* How little doth it ſignifie, that our Names be written upon the Earth, or upon any part of it? Is it not all in all, that our Names are written in the Book of Life? I ſee, there is no reckoning upon thoſe things which men leave behind them when they die; therefore hear, and receive it as a voice from heaven, that which the Spirit ſaith, *Rev.* 14.13. *Bleſſed are the dead which die in the Lord, and their works do follow them.*

MEDITATION XIV.

Upon the Burning of Writings; as Bills, Bonds, Evidences, &c.

HOw many had nothing to ſhow for all the Money they had lent out; for all the Debts that were owing them; upon any accompt: yea, for all their Intereſt in Lands and Houſes, to a great value; but only certain Papers, or Parchments, called Bonds, Shop-Books, Deeds, Conveiances, Leaſes, *&c.* Writings are the moſt compendious Treaſure in, and of the whole World: Of ſo many ſingle Sheets of Parchment, may it not be ſaid by ſome, This is my Money, (all I have in the World;) that is my Houſe; that is my Land; this is my

my Inheritance, that is my Jointer; this is my Patent for ſuch an Office, or for ſuch a Dignity; this is my Diſcharge, for ſo much Money that I have disburſed for ſuch and ſuch; this is my Account, for ſo many thouſands that I have been intruſted with: Oh the vaſt concernment of ſuch Papers and Parchments as theſe! What had not many rather have loſt than theſe? How many were honeſt and juſt in all their Accompts, who now want an opportunity to make it appear they were ſo? (and, Doth not that wound them ſorely?) How many dealt falſely and fraudulently in the truſt that was committed to them, and that cannot be proved neither? Doleful fire! that hath made honeſt men mourn, and knaves rejoyce. With what coſt and care were many of thoſe Writings drawn up at firſt? How oft were the owners at Counſel about them? and, With how much circumſpectneſs was every Clauſe put in? but, Did the fire make any more of them then if they had been ſo much waſte paper? Deeds and Conveiances were no more to thoſe flames than chips, and ſtraw, and ſtubble: How ſlight is that Tenure, by which men do hold and enjoy all their Earthly Poſſeſſions? How ſoon may that, which ſhould defend their title, be ſtoln, or burnt, or otherwiſe loſt? and then, How liable are they to be claimed by thoſe that have no right? Was there ever ſuch a plucking up of Incloſures as this, whereby the Eſtates of many are, as it were, laid common, that is, obnoxious unto being invaded, and over-run by them that will.

It is well, a Chriſtians evidences for heaven are not ſo uncertain: It is true, that coppy of them which is within his own breaſt, may be loſt, or miſſing, at leaſtwiſe for a time; but then there is a

counter-part

counter-part of them kept in heaven, which can never be loſt: for, *The foundation of God ſtands ſure, and he knoweth who are his.* It is happy for us that uncertain things are thoſe of leſs value; but, that thoſe things which are moſt valuable, (though indeed only they) may be aſcertained and inſured in heavenly things. Sad was the loſs of Writings, as they were Evidences of mens Eſtates; but, methinks more ſad, as they were the Vouchers of mens honeſty: or, if by this meanes, either honeſt men become ſuſpected, or, thoſe that have been otherwiſe cannot be detected and diſcovered: But, methinks, where alwayes heretofore found faithful, it is but equal to admit no jealouſie of them upon this occaſion. No doubt, but he, that was faithful till the fire, will be faithfull after it, and not be worſe for that Purgatory (if I may ſo call it.) O Lord, Art not thou he that didſt find out a way to acquit thoſe chaſt Women that were ſuſpected of Adultery, *Numb.* 5. 28? Art not thou he who didſt furniſh *Solomon* with wiſdom, to know which was the true Mother of the living child, to which two Women laid an equal claim, 1 *Kings* 3? Art not thou he that didſt direct Queen *Emma* and others to paſſe the hot plow-ſhares bare-foot and blind-fold, without hurting her ſelf; when, by that ardent fire, proof was to be made of her unſpotted chaſtity? Clear up, I beſeech thee, the integrity of thy innocent ſervants, whoſe Accompts and Acquittances this fire hath deſtroyed: but, as for others, ſearch out their wickedneſs till thou find none; or, as thou ſaidſt, thou wouldſt *ſearch Jeruſalem with candles*, Zeph. 1. 12. What work hath this burning of Writings made for greedy Lawyers? What a har-

veſt

vest are they like to have by that means? One fire, I doubt, will beget another, *viz.* that of endless contention, and Law-suits: Now the fire hath gotten mens Vintage: I wish, unjust Claimers on one hand, and Lawyers on the other, do not sweep away their Gleanings: They are newly leapt out of the fire, and, Must they presently come into the frying-pan? Can the wisdom of our Governors find out no way whereby to prevent vexatious Suits, that will otherwise arise upon this occasion, to preserve the rights of honest men, now their Writings are gone; and, to prevent the unjust claims of those that are dishonest? If ever Magistrates needed a Priest (one, or more) to ask Counsel for them, after the Judgment of *Urim*, before the Lord, *Numb.* 27. 20. (as *Eleazar* did for *Joshua*,) now is the time. Howsoever, thou, O Lord, who girdest up the wrath of men (or so much of it as will not turn to thy praise) vouchsafe to put such a restraint upon the spirits of men, that those, who were half-undone by the fire, may not be utterly so, either by mercilesse Lawyers, or by unrighteous Adversaries, and unjust Claimers.

MEDITATION XV.

Upon the Burning of Saint Pauls *Church: the unconsumed Body of Bishop* Brabrook.

HOw long was this goodly Cathedral in building? How leasurely did it proceed? Insomuch that it became a Proverb, when men did any thing slowly, That they made *Pauls*-work of it: But so did not the fire, when it came to destroy it, but

conſumed it preſently, as if it had been but *Jonas* his gourd, which ſprang up in a night. Dying Perſons are oft-times very reſtleſs, they ſhift from one ſide of their beds to the other, and talk much of removing to other places. So, have I obſerved, this noble Structure, not long before its fatal period, to have ſhifted often. Firſt it was a Church, then a Stable (as ſome were pleaſed to make it) within theſe few years (but the argument was far fetcht, if, they think, that becauſe Chriſt himſelf did ſometimes lie in a Stable and in a Manger, that therefore, one and the ſame place might well ſerve, both for brutiſh and for ſacred uſes) Otherwhile (if not at the very ſame time) it was made a Court of Guard (without any intention, as I believe, to make it an Emblem of the Church Militant, or to exhibit any other religious myſtery.) And then of late, it wheel'd about again to its Primitive uſe, to be a place appropriated to Divine Worſhip. Few expected it would continue long a Stable, or a Court of Guard (for great alienations, like ſtrong ſticks that are much bent, do quickly ſtart back again) but, when it became once more a Church, they that conſidered it had ſtood above five hundred years, from its firſt Erection (yea, and Conflagration, which latter was in 1087. after which it was ſoon built again, and did obſerve it to bear its years well, (as if it were at moſt but of a middle age) ſaw no cauſe to doubt, but it might laſt as much longer. But alas! How were they deceived? and How was its deſtruction at the very door! Surely Papiſts are deceived, in thinking Crucifixes to carry a ſafeguard and protection with them, conſidering, that this Cathedral was built in the figure

gure of a Cross, and yet, when Fire did approach, had no relief by it. It had been a comfortable sight, to have beheld the first erection of that stately Church, considering the Scituation and Dedication of it, that whereas before, in the same place, stood a Temple Dedicated to *Diana* (and as is supposed, a Wood and Grove about it, devoted to her use) there was then another in the room of it; the name whereof might speak the place alienated from heathenism to Christianity, from the service of a false goddesse, to the service of the true God, and of his Son *Jesus Christ*. Twice hath that famous Structure been fired before (at leastwise part of it) both times by lightning, and thereunto exposed by the transcendent height of its Steeple. One of those times it burnt a great part of the City of *London* (if I mistake not;) and now, the City, by a kind of unintended retaliation hath helpt to burn it. Great pity it is to see so noble a building in the dust, and yet it is likely some will but little pity it, if not rejoyce in the ruins of it (especially its disaffected neighbours, whose houses that had wont to lean to the sides of it (like Vines climbing upon a wall) had at leastwise received sentence to be pulled down.) But should not men regard the honor of their Nation, whatsoever became of private interests?

One strange and remarkable passage that did relate to this Cathedral, I cannot but reflect upon, *viz.* The unheard of continuance of a certain dead Body, *viz.* the Body of one Dr. *Braybrook*, sometimes Bishop of *London*, and Lord Chancellor of *England*, which was there interred above two hundred years ago, and, as several that have seen it do inform,

inform, was taken up ſince this fire, and found to retain much of it's manly ſhape, and moſt of it's external parts, to the amazement of ſuch as beheld it, and did withall believe it to be indeed the Body of the ſaid Biſhop. I ſhall not diſpute, whether the dignity of his Perſon, as he was ſometimes a Biſhop, or as he was ſometimes Lord Chancellor, or as he was both at once, were that which did conſign over his Body to ſo long an incorruption, (as if Corruption and Worms had been afraid to claim kindred of him, as of others): but, I think, rather than either, that this came to paſſe to ſhew the power of God, as to preſerving Bodies from Corruption in the Grave, as well as thoſe of the three Children, from being conſumed in the fiery Furnace; and that of *Daniel*, from being devoured by the Lions, when he was in their Den.

But whilſt this paſſage miniſtreth great wonder to all that ſee and hear of it, What is himſelf the better for it? For, had his Body been eaten by Cannibals, thoſe Cannibals by Fiſhes, thoſe Fiſhes afterwards by Men, thoſe Men by Worms, yet, ſhould it have been brought forth as perfect, at the Reſurrection of the Dead, as now it is; yea, as it was then, when it was firſt committed to the Grave.

Now, as for re-building of that Cathedral, when I conſider, how many Sons that Mother hath had, who in all Ages have been as kind and bountiful to her, as could be deſired; I doubt not, but the ſame principles and affections which led them to it in her proſperity, will prevail with them to be the ſame, now ſhe lieth in the duſt; commiſeration towards her, and conſideration of the honour of *England*, ſtepping in as further incentives thereunto.

thereunto. May *England* (if the will of God be so) enjoy so much peace and plenty, and all the living Temples of God be so well provided for, that none may grudge that cost and charge, which is necessary to re-building Churches; not onely such, and so many, as may serve for indispensable use, but neither that also, which may rear up others, not only for use, but such as may be also, an outward honour and ornament both to the Church and Nation.

MEDITATION XVI.

Upon the Visiblenesse of Gods Hand in the Destruction of London.

IT is a great dispute, amongst many people, whether men (one or more) had any hand, from first to last, in the burning of *London*. They that are for the affirmative, think they have much reason on their side, because one was, by Order of Law, executed upon that account; and the proof against him, no lesse than his own Confession (both in publick and private) in which he long persisted, though he knew full well the danger of it. Now, who but a mad man, would confess himself guilty, of so hainous and odious a crime which he had never committed? And on the other hand, had he been mad, his Judge and Jury wanted not wisedom and diligence sufficient, by one means or other, to discover it: neither had they so little Justice and Conscience, as to have convicted and condemned him, for ought he had said against himself, if it had been evident to them, he had not been himself, or, as they call it, *Mentis Compos.*

pos. Moreover, say they, This must needs have been done, either by Over-sight, or by Treachery, or by Miracle. We hear not of the least umbrage of any over-sight, or carelessnesse in any of the Family where the fire began, (which doubtlesse hath been narrowly lookt into): so that if we reject the second, we must rest in the third, *viz.* That it was done by a miraculous, that is, by an immediate Hand of Heaven, which, since the time that miracles have generally ceased, seems far less probable, than it is, that that should be true, which a man, that, for ought could be made appear, was in his right wits, did confesse against his own life.

But grant it were so, that the first fireing of any part of *London*, were wilfully done, by that miserable Wretch, who took it upon himself and was executed for it, Will it follow from thence, that the Hand of God was not visible upon it? Yea, all things considered, if *Pharaoh*'s Magicians had been then alive and present, they would have said, *This was the Finger of God*, as they said in another case, when it was undeniable. For, first of all, Who but the great God, withheld Rain for so many weeks before, and sent so great a Drought, as did make the houses ready to take fire, like so much Tinder? Who brought the wind out of his Treasures, and made it blow so fiercely for several days together, as if it had been on purpose to augment and spread those flames like mighty bellows? Who that had begun that fire, could foresee the wind would continue so long to carry on his work, and not suffer those flames to be extinguished as other fires have been? Who dried up the Springs, that when men came to dig for water in severall Streets,

Streets, little could be had, where uſed to be plenty at other times? By whoſe Providence came it to paſſe, that the Engines, which uſed to be ſerviceable in ſuch caſes, were at that time, moſt of them out of kelter, and unfit for uſe? Who took away ſpirit and courage from men, that they were at that time (above all the reſt) like ſilly Doves without heart, and, contrary to their uſuall manner, did generally apply themſelvs, not to extinguiſhing the fire, but unto removing their goods, (even ſuch as were competently remote) as if they had given all for loſt at the firſt daſh. Who hid counſell from mens eyes, that ſo obvious and effectuall a way, as that of Blowing up of houſes to ſtop the increaſe of fire, was not ſooner thought of? Or, if it were, that it was no ſooner put in Execution? I ſay, Who but the great God did all theſe things? Who cauſed the fire to burn fiercely, as well againſt the wind as with it? Diſown Providence in this, and you will diſown it every where. If there were ſomething of the hand of man in it, doubtleſſe, there was more of the hand of God.

But yet, more do they intitle the Providence of God to this fire, who ſeem confident, there was nothing of Treachery or Deſign in it. For, if they think it came in an ordinary way (but unintendedly); things that ſo happen, are in Scripture more eſpecially put upon God's account. It is ſaid of him that killed a man accidentally, and without any purpoſe ſo to do, that *God had delivered him into his hands*, Exod. 21. 13. Moreover, when things that come by accident, or, without humane contrivance, ſo fall out, as if all things had been laid and prepared for ſuch a purpoſe, in

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such cases the Divine Providence is most visible and conspicuous. Now manifest it is, that if a Councill of Jesuits had laid their heads together, how they might burn *London* to the ground, they could not have chosen, either a fitter time, or place. Not a fitter time, in respect of the great Drought that had been, and wind that then was; not yet a fitter place, considering the vicinity of it, to the great magazine of Combustible Materials, to wit, Pitch, Tar, Oils, Hemp, and Powder it's self: (viz. *Thames*-street). Moreover, how near was it to the Water-houses, the burning down of which places, was just like a subtle Enemy his seizing upon some considerable Forts, which might otherwise stand in his way, and obstruct his design. It makes me think of what is spoken, *Psal.* 78. 50. how that *God did make a way to his anger*, as if he would have nothing to hinder the passage of it: And, upon the whole, I cannot but recount those words of God, by his Prophet, to the Jews, *Jer.* 18. 11. *Behold, I frame evil against you, and devise a device against you*: for methinks it apppeareth like a Destruction wisely framed and devised.

But, as for such, as think it came neither by Treachery, nor by Casualty, they must needs ascribe it to meer Providence, and to nothing else; not onely to God, but to God alone, like the burning of *Nadab* and *Abihu*, or, of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*. So that, let men derive the pedigree of this fire whence they will (as there are three conjectures about it) they cannot exclude the Providence of God from having signally appeared in it. It is a sign the great God is not ashamed of what he hath done, and that he cares not who knows it:

For,

For, how easie had it been for him, to have contrived the burning of *London* in such a way, as that himself might scarce have been seen in it, that men would generally have thought, it had been the hand of Man, and not of God, any more than every thing else is: But now, methinks it is, as if the great God had said, If any man ask, Who set *London* on fire? let the Circumstances tell them, It was I, that did it.

Surely, something is the matter, that God should, as it were, glory, in making known, that he it was that set *London* on fire: Was it not to show, that he had a Controversie with us? Might it not be also, lest his governing of the World should be called in question, if so great a thing should have hapned, to all appearance, by meer chance and fortune? Was it not also to make us stoop, and submit to so great a loss, upon such an accompt, as *David* did, when he said, *I held my peace, because thou Lord didst it*: Or, Might it not be also, to tell us, That he challengeth to himself just Power and Authority, to burn up great Cities at his pleasure; and, *Who shall say unto him, what doest thou?* As *Lebanon* is said, not to be sufficient for him to burn; so neither was *London* more than sufficient: O *London*, Disdain not to fall by that hand by which thou art fallen: It was not that poor Miscreant, that ended his dayes at *Tyburn*, that did, or could, by his own power destroy thee (though possibly he may be somewhere Canonized for the Saint that did it.) If God had not first dried thee, he, and a hundred more, could never have burnt thee: If he kindled the fire, it would have gone out again, if God had not blowed the coal: It was he that saith, *Behold, I shake heaven and earth*: It is

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he that can take hold of the Pillars of the Universe, and tumble it down when he pleaseth: It is he, that in processe of time, will serve the whole World as he served thee: It was he, I say, that bid thee come down and lie in the dust. Humble thy self under his mighty hand; He can raise thee up again, *and make thee a Princesse among the Nations*, when *Paris* and *Rome* may chance to lie in Ashes.

MEDITATION XVII.

Upon the burning of the Sessions-house in the Old-Baily.

WHat a rebuke is it to the Censoriousnesse of men, who are ready to charge *London* with greater sins than other places are guilty of, because this great Judgment fell upon it. I say, what a rebuke is it to them, to behold the most eminent seat of Justice in all those parts, consumed by the same fire? Who dare, or who truly can, in this case, apply those words of *Solomon*, *Eccles.* 3. 16. *I saw under the Sun the place of Judgment that Wickednesse was there, and the place of Righteousnesse that Iniquity was there?* For amidst all the complaints of men about other matters, and particular distastes they have taken at particular persons or passages, I do not know that man, that will deny, that there is as much of Law and Conscience to be found amongst the Reverend Judges, which are at this day, as amongst the Judges of any Time and Age whatsoever: The consideration whereof, may be no small comfort to the poor Citizens, whose difficult Cases, relating to the

the fire are like to lie in their breasts, and be subjected to their wise determination (which, I hope, will be such, as may abundantly confirm that honourable Character, which I think, but justice to give concerning them).

Yet was that honourable and most eminent place of their Sessions, within the City burnt amongst the rest. How commodious was that place for their work; for that it was scituate near to the great Den of Theeves, and Receptacle of Felons: (*Newgate* I mean) it being requisite, that Justice and Sin should not dwell far asunder, but, that the former should, as it were, tread upon the heels of the latter. From thence had many Malefactors received sentence to be deservedly executed, but now the place it self, which (for what cause we know not) had received an unexpected sentence in heaven, had it executed accordingly, and came to an untimely end, yet had it stood so long, as to acquire the name of Old, being called the *Old-Baily*, and, as one Author thinks, was a Court of Justice, for some purposes above three hundred years since, *viz.* in the year 1356. And what more than Old or very Old can be attributed to any Creature upon earth, in point of duration, none of which, in this world, shall be perpetual (for that is more than the world it self shall be.) The Apostle telling us, that all these things shall be dissolved. When places of Justice are destroyed, perhaps Malefactors will rejoyce, (though they have little cause; for change of place will no whit mitigate their punishment) but all true and honest men will be sorry. May there nere want a place, in which to try and arraign Malefactors (in case there be any such) but much

rather do I wish, there might no more be any Malefactors deserving to be tried.

MEDITATION. XVIII.

Upon the Gates and Prisons of London, *that were burnt.*

COncerning those, that use an after care, and provide too late, our Proverb is, *That when the Steed is stolen, they shut the Stable door*: but the fire, when it had stollen the Steed, I mean destroyed the City, flung open the Gates, or rather demolished and ruinated severall of them. (Gates without a City being as insignificant, and to as little purpose, as a City without Gates is unsafe.) Yet had those Gates been standing, which are not (I mean in strength and perfection) it might have carried a good Omen and Presage with it, as if they had been left to enclose and secure a City, which should afterwards be built (though there were scarcely any for them to secure at present;) but we trust through divine goodness, the same thing will be done (but with more charge) without that Omen. No man can tell where destruction will begin or where it will make an end, for that sometimes it makes an end, where usually it begins. Destruction usually assaults the Gates of a City first, and then the City it self; the loss of the Gates doth generally prove the losing of the City: but, in this case, the losing of the City first, proved the loss of the Gates at last: The fire went out of the City by the Gates, but it came not in that way. There are famous Gates for Death and Misery to enter in by, which are all

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we look at, generally; and, if they be but shut, we think our selves secure; (alas! but too secure are we in one sense, for thinking so,) sith Death and Misery have so many secret in-lets which we know not of; and can make a way, where they scarce find any. We thought, if *London* had been destroyed, (as now it is,) it must have been by some powerful enemy, visibly entring in at its Gates; but, little did we think of what one spake in another case; That, there was ἔνδον τὸ κακὸν, some such invisible evils, or enemies within us, as were sufficient to destroy it in this fashion: Alas! When can we conclude our selves safe in this World?

Besides that great Ornament which those stately Gates, that were burnt, added to the City, and the great Defence which they afforded thereunto, (as to enemies from without,) Were they not also very serviceable, as they were the fittest places, in reference to their impregnable strength, whereof to make Goales and Prisons; (neither are there any Houses more necessary than they,) so long as there are many lewd People, whom no other places but such can keep within compass; for whom Prisons are as needful, as Chimneys are for fire: which, set at liberty, would put all into a flame: But now came an unexpected Goal-delivery, better to many poor Prisoners, than they looked for: but, to Capital-Offenders not so good, as it is like, they did hope it would have proved. When notorious Felons heard of this, probably they did hope, it would break open the doors of their several Prisons, and set them free: but, all they got by it, was, only a Newer-*Newgate*, or to be removed from one Goal to another: But, poor Men, that

were in for Debt only, as in *Lud-gate*, &c. possibly they were in a pannick-fear they should have been burnt in the Prisons where they were, not knowing how to make an escape: But, if I mistake not, they were released in the time of the fire, which had left but room enough for Offenders of a higher nature: So was the Proverb verified, that, *It is an ill-Wind that blowes no body any good*: So was the Fire more merciful to them than their Creditors: so were their fears converted into joy. Is it not worth mentioning, How that *Cannibal*-fire did first roast, and then devour those Quarters of human flesh, which upon those Gates were exposed to the Fowls of the Air; robbing them of their prey, and burying them in the dust much sooner than was expected: Now may it be said, That the Gates of *London*, as of old, That the Gates of *Sion* did mourn. VVe little thought the time had been so near, when the Security of *London* should not consist so much in its Gates and VValls, (I say, its Security, as from a forraign Enemy: for, *Nullus ad amissas ibit opes*,) as in its un-enviable Ruins and Poverty.

MEDITATION XIX.

Upon the Conflagration of the Universe.

IT is evident by Scripture, that the *Heavens and the earth* (which are now) *are reserved unto fire against the day of Judgement*, 2 Pet. 3. 7. And, *That in the day of God* (as it is called,) *the heavens, being on fire, shall be dissolved; and the elements shall melt with fervent heat*, Vers. 12. *Yea, the heavens shall passe away with a great noise; the earth also, and the works that*

that are thereof ſhall be burnt up, Verſ. 10. Some think, that fire ſhall only refine, and purifie, not conſume and deſtroy: But, beſides that the expreſſions of the *heavens* their *being diſſolved, and paſſing away*; and that of the *earth*, its being *burnt up*, ſeem to import more, than a bare purifying of both, or either of them: Why ſhould we think the World it ſelf ſhould laſt, when all the Inhabitants of it ſhall be removed into another World? Surely, the World will be of no further uſe, when there ſhall be no one Man or Woman to Inhabit it, and to adore God in, and for it: God made the World for Mans uſe, and therefore will unmake it again, when Man hath no further uſe for it; (as Men uſe to pull down Tents, when they have no further occaſion for them.) The World is but Gods Nurſery, (ſuch a thing I mean as *Gardiners* uſe to call by that name,) from whence he means to tranſplant all he there ſets; and, when that is done, he will pull down his fences, and let it run to ruin: Yea, he will lett-in fire as a wild Bore, that ſhall deſtroy it. Whoſoever believes that God made the World, cannot but think he is able to deſtroy it; for that it ſeems much eaſier of the two, to bring ſomething to nothing, than to bring ſomething out of nothing. What a ſolemn time will that be, when the whole world ſhall be in flames? What a petty, puny fire was that which burnt up *London*, to that which ſhall conſume the whole world? For what was *London* to *England*? What is *England*, in compariſon of all the Earth? Or what is the whole Earth, in compariſon of the Globe of Heaven, which conſiſts of innumerable Stars, ſome one of which, is far bigger than the ſurface of the whole Earth? Surely, the fiering of

one City, was but a blaze, to what the burning of the whole Fabrick of Heaven and Earth will be. We have seen great things, in reference to this Fire, such as our Fathers never saw; but these are nothing, to what, both we, and they shall see at the Great Day. Though I cannot conceive, what kind of fire it should be, that might be able to dissolve the Heavens and melt the Elements; yet will I believe the matter of things contained in Scripture, though I cannot reach the manner, how such things should be. He that can withhold fire from consuming that which is in it's self Combustible, can make those things Combustible, which, in their own nature are not so, or rather, can inable fire to consume them. God, by setting fire upon the whole World, will let us see, He can spare it. He is Conscious to his own power, that he can make another World when he pleaseth, yea, as many Worlds as now there are Stars. He was infinitely happy before he made the World, (which, in comparison of Himself was but of yesterday, for what is six thousand years to Eternity?) and He will Be still, when the world shall be no more. He was Light to himself, when, as yet, there were no Sun, Moon, and Stars; yea, he was Light it's self, so he is, and so he will be, when all those lights shall be put out. We cannot better afford, to burn a Rush-candle till we have burnt it out, (or, when that is done, misse it lesse) than he can, to burn up the Sun it's self and to disfurnish all the Stars of their borrowed light.

God looks upon this world, as that which is too good for wicked men alwayes to enjoy, but not good enough for his Children alwayes to continue in (*Of whom the world is not worthy*, Heb. 11.)

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and so being not fit, to be the eternal Mansion, either of the one, or of the other, hath resolved, that when it hath served to the end, for which it was made, it shall be burnt: His Friends shall have better Mansions, his Enemies shall not have so good: How soon the Conflagration of the World shall be, Who can tell? God prefixed the time in which he would destroy the first World, *viz.* within a hundred and twenty years after warning given, but hath not done so by this. *Of that day and hour knows no man; no, not the Son of man (viz.* as man.) It may be nearer at hand, than we are aware of: The ends of the world seem to be upon us: If Saint *John*, and others contemporary with him, called the time wherein they lived, *The last time*, 1 *John* 2. 18. *Heb.* 1. 2. 2 Pet. 3. 3. What may this be called? Well might the Psalmist say, *This their way is their folly*, of them, whose inward thought was, that their House and Lands should continue for ever, *Psalm* 49. 11. whereas, alas, the world it self shall not do so. Were they secure, that were told, The world should be drowned, at the end of a hundred and twenty years, and would not regard; and are not we, that know the world shall be burnt, and that, for ought we know, within half that time, or less, and yet are not affected with it? Ought not the very thoughts of that burning, to be as a fiery Chariot, to convey our minds from earth to heaven? Ought it not to quench our affections to the world, as one heat puts out another; so the heat of the Sun puts out the Fire. I observe Saint Peter to say, that *The earth and the works that are thereof, shall be burnt*, by which, I suppose, he means the works of Art (because he speaks of none of the works of heaven,

which are all natural) such as are, strong Towers, stately Pallaces, famous Cities, and such like. Now the day in which that shall be done (saith he) *shall come upon the world as a thief in the night*, that is, suddenly, and unexpectedly. Nor know I, what better use can be made of the doctrine of the Worlds intended Destruction by fire, than that which we read, 2 *Pet.* 3. 11. *Seing then, that all these things shall be dissolved, What manner of persons ought we to be, in all holy conversation and godliness?*

MEDITATION XX.

Upon the Fire of Hell.

WHo can think on the late dreadfull fire without some serious reflections on the more dreadful fire of hell? If that *Topbet* which is spoken of, *Isa.* 30. 33. be the same with Hell, methinks the description of it is such, as doth not a little agree with our late fire, *The pile thereof* (saith the Prophet) *is much wood, the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it.* Was not the pile of our late fire much wood, of Churches, Houses, and other Structures? and did not the wind (which may be called the breath of the Lord) so kindle it, or rather, increase it, as if it had been a mighty stream of Brimstone poured in upon it? Some are not more hard to believe there is a Hell (a Lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, which is, The second death) than they would have been, to believe, that any such fire, should, or could have fallen upon *London*, as that which lately did. If more dreadful things than we could imagine, do happen unforetold, (as the late

late Judgement for one)? Why should we think those incredible, which the Scripture plainly speaks of, though they far transcend our imagination, and what we should otherwise expect? Nothing can make the burning of *London*, and the misery attending it, seem small, but, to consider the fire of Hell, and the misery of the damned; and that considered, this doth even vanish and disappear before it. For, What is a fire of four days continuance, to that which shall last more millions of millions of Ages, than there are minutes in the space of four dayes and nights? Or, What is a fire, preying upon Houses and Goods, to that, which shall prey upon Bodies and Souls; as Christ hath commanded us, to *Fear him, who can cast Soul and body into hell.* If one Soul be (as it is) more worth than many worlds, how much lesse is one City worth than many thousand souls? Neither is Hel an uncompounded torment, consisting of fire onely; but there are other ingredients, to make the misery of it more unsufferable: *There is the worm that shall never die, there is the darknesse that shall never end.* There is the heat of fire to Torment, but not the light of fire to Refresh. Oh the demerit of sin, that fire, which of it's self is so intolerable a torment, should not be thought sufficient to punish it! Shall I dread fire alone (such as that which befell the City) and shall I not dread more scorching flames than those, accompanied with a gnawing worm and a perpetual night? I can heartily say with that good man, *Hic ure, hic seca, Domine, sed in æternum parce*, Here, O Lord, cut and burn, and do what thou wilt with me: onely spare in Eternity. May the consideration of Hell-fire, not onely deterr me from sin, but

also kindle love to Christ within me, who is therefore called *Jesus, because he shall save his people from the wrath to come.*

MEDITATION XXI.

Upon the coming of that most dreadful fire in ſſ *Idolized a year, as* 1666.

WHen will men give over groundleſſe prophecying? When will they learn, not to be wiſe above what is written? Did not Chriſt ſay to his Diſciples, *It is not for you to know the times and ſeaſons, which the Father hath put in his own hands.* One ſaid, That an Itch of diſputing was in his time, the ſcab of the Church; and in our time, an Itch of prophecying hath been the ſame thing. According to the manifold prophecies, which have been concerning it, 66. ſhould have been a year of *Jubilee*, I had almoſt ſaid a time of the Reſtitution of all things, but, alas! Whilſt men lookt for light, behold darkneſs, whilſt they cried Peace, peace, greater deſtruction then ever, was coming upon them. It is ſaid, that *God hath ſet one over againſt the other to the end that man ſhould find nothing after him.* Eccleſ. 7. 14. If it be the glory of God to conceal a matter (as the Scripture ſaith, it is) why will men pretend to know what God intends to do? Who can tell what the womb of a day, much more of a year will bring forth? If women that are with child know not what they go with, whether male or female, wiſe or fooliſh, who can tell what is in the womb of Providence? Such as pretend to foreknow future contingencies, are not more admired for their wiſdom before the time be expired, than they are aſſually

ally condemned for their folly and preſumption, when the event proves otherwiſe. We read in Jer. 23. 28. *There were prophets of the deceit of their own hearts. Which cauſe the people to forget the name of God by the dreams, which they tell every one to his neighbour.* Therefore, ſaith God, *The prophet which hath a dream, let him tell a dream, and he that hath my word let him ſpeak my word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat?* We ſay proverbially, Old Birds cannot be caught with chaff, yet a great many are with ſuch chaff as the prophet ſpeaks of, meaning falſe Predictions: many of which ſhould by right have been written in Hebrew Characters, for that the event ſhews they were to be read backwards, like the preſages of Almanack-makers concerning weather, who frequently tell us, it will be fair when it proves foul, and foul when it proves very fair.

The Devil himſelf is more tender of his credit than many men have bin of theirs: for it was always his manner to deliver Oracles in Ambiguous expreſſions, that, whatſoever the event were, he might not be charged with falſhood; whereas men (that know leſs) have ventur'd to ſpeak as plainly and poſitively as could be, touching things to come, which falling out quite contrary have filled their faces with ſhame. If that had been the worſt, it had been no great matter: but, alas! men have not only wounded their own reputations by their daring falſe propheſies, but by accuſtoming themſelves and others, to believe and disbelieve again, have greatly propagated Atheiſm in the world, and made the abuſed credulity of many to end in infidelity. They that have been often deceived, become always jealous, and uſe to ſay, Alas! whom

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or what can we truſt? Though there be no reaſon in the world that men ſhould ſuſpect the Word of God becauſe they have been fruſtrated by the dreams of men; I cannot deny but that there are and have been ſtrong impreſſions from God upon the minds of ſome men concerning future things, but, as the Apoſtle ſaith in another caſe, Haſt thou faith, have it to thy ſelf before God: ſo in this caſe though they themſelves cannot but believe the things which are ſo impreſſed upon them, yet let them keep that faith to themſelves, and not expect others ſhould believe the ſame things, unleſs by miracles they could prove themſelves to be Prophets ſent of God; or till ſuch time as the event ſhall ſhew they were not miſtaken. A propheſie may indeed and in truth ſignifie much to him that utters it, which yet may ſignifie nothing at all to them that hear it, becauſe he may have received it from God, whereas others have received it but from himſelf. As to all the prophecies concerning great, good things, which ſhould befall *England* in Sixty ſix, be it to themſelves upon what grounds they have had ſuch expectations; ſure I am, nothing hath yet appeared that looks like a fulfilling of them, though the year be almoſt expired. He that foretold that *Cæſar* ſhould die upon ſuch a day, *Cæſar* ſending him word the day was come, and he was yet alive, made anſwer that day was come, but it was not paſt & gone, and die he did upon that day; So ſome it may be will tell us that Sixty ſix is come, and far ſpent, but not quite paſt and gone. 'Tis very true, and ſo long as one day or hour of that year laſts, let them lengthen out their hopes. If it produce what they have foretold, I ſhall not envy them the honor of proving true Prophets; but if it

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end as it hath begun, and held on hitherto; give me leave to ſay, that meer humane Predictions touching future Contingencies ought never to be truſted more; and that the fruſtrations of Sixty ſix, ſhould aboliſh or prevent the credulitie of all after-ages.

There is a Text or two, which I ſuppoſe, many do build upon, who have great regard to humane propheſies. We read, ſay they, that the *Secret of the Lord is with them that fear him*, Pſalm 25. 14. But that muſt not be underſtood, as if God did make them that fear him acquainted with all his Secrets: for it is ſaid of Chriſt himſelf, conſidered as man, that *Of that day and hour*, ſpeaking of the day of Judgment, *knows not the ſon of man himſelf*. Moreover, ſay they, in *Amos* 3. 7. it is written, *Surely the Lord will do nothing, but he revealeth his ſecrets unto his ſervants the Prophets*. Yea, but where are ſuch Prophets to be found in theſe dayes as were in thoſe, *viz.* Approved of God amongſt men by miracles, ſigns, and wonders, as is ſaid of Chriſt, *Acts* 2. 22? Doth not Experience ſhew, that the Gift of prophecying (as thereby is meant the infallible predicting of things) is either wholly, or for the moſt part at an end, as well as ſeveral other Gifts, which were intended but for the infancy of the Church: If it be ſaid, that it is written, *In the laſt dayes, your young men ſhall ſee viſions, and your old men ſhall dream dreams, your ſons and daughters ſhall propheſie*, it is evident, from *Acts* 3. 16. that that was fulfilled in the Apoſtles time: for, ſaith *Peter*, when the Holy Ghoſt was poured out upon the Diſciples, when they were filled with the Holy Ghoſt and ſpake with other Tongues, *This is that which was ſpoken by* Joel, *I will*

will powre out my ſpirit upon all fleſh, and they ſhall propheſie, &c. But, it is further ſaid, that the predictions of ſome good men, have come to paſſe, they have hit right (as they call it). That may be too, and yet ſuch as they may be no Prophets to us, that is, no ſuch Prophets as we are bound to believe, till the Event have declared, that they themſelves were not deceived. : It may not be alwayes from Divine Revelation, that men propheſie rightly concerning things to come: A man may draw a Bow at an adventure, and ſhoot at random, and yet happen to hit the mark, though he that ſhall do ſo, will miſſe it much oftner. Now, as one ſaith, *Men mind when predictions hit, not when they miſſe*, and that is the reaſon, they give ſo much heed to them: Whereas indeed, as in predicting of weather, when it ſhall be fair, and when it ſhall be fowl; ſo in other things, though men ſpeak but what comes next it is almoſt as hard to be alwayes out, as it is to be alwayes right.

How fain would I prevail with men not to lean upon the broken Reed of uncertain Prophecies? *Whereon, if a man lean, it will go into his hand and pierce him* (as was ſaid of *Egypt*) *Iſa.*36.6. Pierce you they will, more wayes than one: as namely, With ſhame, when you ſee your confidence diſappointed: With ſorrow, when you ſee your hopes fruſtrated: With reproach, when others ſhall deride you, and ſay, Is this the good time you lookt for? Is this the Deliverance you expected? What now is become of all your Prophecies, touching what would be ſuch and ſuch a year? All this Reproach you might ſave, if you would believe no more than what the Scripture warrants you to believe: Where

Where doth that speak of the glorious things that shall be in the year 1666? or, give you to expect more from that, than from any other year? Are not Divine-Promises sufficient for your comfort, unless you eake them out with human Prophecies, (as the Papists do the Counsels of Scripture, with the Traditions of men:) It is well, if some do not derive more comfort from fallible Predictions, than from the infallible Word. Is not *the Name of the Lord a strong Tower*? Why then will you betake your selves to a *refuge of lies*? It is enough for poor deluded *Jews* to be alwayes comforting themselves with one vain Prophecy or other, (as they are observed to be seldom without:) but, it is below *Christians* so to do, who have a sure Word of Prophecy; which they should take heed to, *as to a light shining in a dark place*. Be confident, Faith, and Credulity are very different things: The first builds upon a Rock; the last upon Quick-sands. Believe, but be not Credulous; many credulous people make many false Prophets, (as they say Receivers make Thieves:) There will never want people to make Propheſies, so long as there are enough to entertain them, and to trust upon them. Jer. 5. 31. *The Prophets propheſie falsely, and the People love to have it so.* There are too many, that say in their hearts, *Si populus vult decipi decipietur*: If People will be deceived, they shall. Many small Prophets, in this, and other ages, seem Merchant-adventurers for a little credit; They will be the Authors of a Prediction right or wrong; it is fit it be pleasing, whether it be true or no: If it come to pass, they shall have a great deal of credit by it; and, in the mean time, it makes them to be somewhat more taken notice of; and, if it be frustrated, they

they are not the first that were mistaken, there have been, and are many false Prophets besides themselves: When shall I see men so modest, as to tell their uncertain Predictions, as their Dreams, not as heavenly Dictates, in their own names, and not in the Name of God, saying, *Thus saith the Lord*: but rather, My mind bodes me so and so; Thus saith my imagination, and I cannot withstand it. At leastwise when shall I see others so wise as to hearken to them, only as such, and upon no other account till experience have proved them to be more than so. It is time enough to believe a humane Propheſie when you see it fulfilled: and you pay it a sufficient respect, if, in the mean time, you suspend your judgment, and forbear to censure it. O *Sixty-six*! Thou center of human Propheſies! Thou Ocean, into which all the Rivers of Conjectural Predictions did run! If I live to see thee end, as thou hast continued hitherto; for thy sake, if for nothing else (yet, upon other considerations too,) if men will find confidence to make a thousand Prophecies, no wayes countenanced by Scripture, I shall not find Faith to believe one of them.

MEDITATION XXII.

Upon the fire, it's beginning on the Lords-Day in the Morning.

WAs there nothing in the Circumstance of Time, in which that fire began, *viz.* upon the *Lords*-Day? *Doth not Providence determine the times before-appointed, as well as the bounds of our habitations?* Acts 17.26. Might not *Herod* read his sin

ſin in the time in which the Angel of God ſmote him, and the Worms received a commiſſion to eat him up? which was immediately after he had received that Acclamation from the People, ſaying, *It is the voice of God, and not of man,* Acts 12. 23. Neither can I think it was without its ſignification, that *London* began to burn upon the *Lords-Day*. Were not the *Sabbath-Dayes*-ſins of *London* greater, than its ſins upon other dayes; it being a certain truth, that, if mens actions be evil, the better day, the worſe action; as, in caſe they be good, The better day, we ſay, the better deed? Juſtly might ſuch a fire have hapned, had it been only to puniſh the uſual profanations of the *Lords-Day*. How many had been playing on that very day, if, by this ſad providence, they had not been ſet at work? How many had been then imployed in ſervile, and (at that time) unlawful Works, if ſuch a work of Mercy, and Charity, as was delivering themſelves and their ſubſtance from the fire, had not been put upon them? How many had then been exerciſing themſelves *in Gluttony and Drunkenneſs; in Rioting and Chambering; in Filthineſs and Uncleanneſs*; if the care of preſerving themſelves and their Goods had not diverted them? How many, that followed their honeſt Labours all the Week, had wont to find their ſinful pleaſures on the *Lords-Day*?

Alaſs! That the Day, which God at firſt bleſſed, as well as ſanctified, ſhould then be curſed, (if I may ſo call it,) above any other dayes that went before it: That *Londoners* ſhould have the moſt reſtleſs Day that ever they had generally had, both as to Body and Mind; of that, which was at firſt appointed for a Day of Reſt: On that Day, in

which God began to Create the World, in the first Day of the Week did he begin to destroy that great City: Yea, The Day of *Christ* his Resurrection, was the first Day of *London*'s Death and Burial. Did not good Men hope to have been Praying, Hearing, Singing of *Psalms*; Eating and Drinking, in remembrance of *Christ*, on that very day, in which they were forced to be quenching of Houses, carrying out of Goods, conveying away their Wives and Children? How sadly were Churches filled on that Day, not with Men and Women, (as upon other such Dayes,) but with Wares and Houshold-stuff? And, How much more sadly were they emptied, some of them, on that very Day; not by exportation, but by conflagration? Poor *Londoners* carried their Goods to several Churches, to sacrifice them to flames, (as it proved,) though with an intention to have secured them; those places proving Sepulchres, which they repaired to as Sanctuaries.

O fatal, and never to be forgotten Sabbath! No emblem, as other of those dayes, of that rest, which glorious Saints injoy in Heaven; but rather of the day of Judgment, which is called, *The great and terrible day of the Lord*: *Black-Sunday*, some will call it; (as formerly there was much discourse of a *Black-Monday*:) That was expected, and came not: this was not expected, and yet it came, *like a thief in the night*. I doubt not but men went to their beds over-night as securely as ever they had done in their lives: yea, those that dwelt in the house where it first began, and slept as soundly, for the time, as ever they used to do, not questioning but the insuing-Sabbath would be like all the rest; but when the early morning began to fall-in-travel

with

with that un-lookt-for-evil, which it was big with; when it began to cry out with a very lowd and doleful out-cry: How did it awaken them, with a witneſs, and make them call all their Neighbours round about them; and, in a few hours give a dreadful Alarme to the whole City. That *Lords-Day* was much more a repreſentation of Hell, than of Heaven; thongh both the Work, and Reſt of the Sabbath, at other times, be a repreſentation of Heaven, not of Hell. I ſee then, how eaſily God can *turn our Bleſſings into Curſes; and, the Songs of the Temple into Howlings*: Amos 8. 3. Not only the *Jews* of old had need to Pray, but we alſo, *That our flight may not be upon the Lords-Day*: For, ſo it was at this time notwithout a real aggravation of the Judgment, (as they eſteem'd it,) who did unfeignedly deſire to have been at that time waiting upon God in his Ordinances, and who know what it is, in effect, to loſe a Sabbath.

MEDITATION XXIII.

Upon the Place where this dreadful fire began, viz. at a Bakers-*Houſe in* Pudding-lane.

METhinks the Burning of *London*, by Means of that obſcure Lane, was like the killing of that great Giant *Goliah*, by a Pibble-Stone, ſlung from the Sling and Arm of little-*David*; or, like the ſlaying of a thouſand *Philiſtims* meerly with the *Jaw-bone of an Aſs*, Judg. 15. 15. Or, like the *throwing down the walls of* Jericho *with the ſound of Ramsborns*. It may be the great God did deſign nothing but Glory to himſelf, in imploying ſo mean and inconſiderable an Inſtrument in the deſtruction of

that great City; but, it looks like a Father's ſpitting in his Daughters face, which would be a puniſhment carrying a ſhew of contempt with it. When that poor Lane was on Fire, I doubt not, but many thought, that other places, of greater note and eminency, would do well enough, as did appear, by removing their goods thither, and no further, (as to *Aldermanbury*, &c.) But, it ought to be conſidered, that Judgments do many times aſcend; and, though they begin at the loweſt round of the Ladder, yet they do not make an end till they have climbed up to the very top. Though this Fire began with a *Bakers*-Houſe, yet its ambition, (if I may ſo phraſe it,) was not ſatisfied, till it had conſumed the Houſes of the Chief-Magiſtrates, and the places of greateſt eminency. When God is Correcting Mean-Men, Great-Ones ſhould tremble, and ſeek to make their Peace, leſt the Cup go round. I am deceived, if ſome Perſons of Quality did not die of the laſt years Plague, though it befel the Poor more generally, who were not able to provide for their ſafety by flying: But, when the Judgment is by Fire, great Houſes go to rack as well as ſmall; for, one can no more fly than can the other: Houſes have no wings but thoſe which Fire gives them, when they fly away for good and all, once for all: They eaſily fly by fire, but can never fly from it.

But, Will it yield us nothing of a profitable *Meditation*, that this fire began in a *Bakers*-Houſe? Had the hazardouſneſs of that Calling, as to matter of fire, or careleſneſs of the People, been the cauſe of its beginning there; when the Natural cauſe had been ſo plain, the Moral ground of it had been leſs worth our inquiring: But, I find not any thing

thing of that nature ſo much as ſuſpected; yea, ſome to this day will not believe, that it came to paſs otherwiſe, then by an immediate hand of Providence: Whoſe Incredulouſneſs in one thing is not ſo great, but their Credulity in another is greater, if they think it were fired from Heaven immediately. That it came by any in the Family is not miſtruſted; that it was by His meanes that Confeſſed himſelf Guilty, or by the Treachery of any other, they will not believe: And, if neither of theſe two wayes, there is but a third can be thought of, (and they muſt have a Faith of Miracles, that believe it to have come that way;) and, that is, As Fire came upon *Sodom*, *viz.* from heaven immediately: But, when I conſider where it began, (not to diſpute how, or by whoſe means,) I cannot well over-look a paſſage or two in the Prophet *Hoſeah*; *viz. Hoſ.* 7. 4. *They are all Adulterers, as an Oven heated by the Baker, who ceaſeth from raiſing after he hath kneeded the dough, untill it be leavened*: Thoſe words contain a part of Gods controverſie with *Ephraim*, that is, with the Ten Tribes, *viz.* Firſt, for their eagerneſs in ſin, they were like a Fiery-Oven, very hot upon their Whoredoms, whether Corporal, or Spiritual. *Secondly*, For their Security in ſin; They were like a *Baker* faſt-aſleep, whilſt his Oven is heating, and his Dough taking Leaven. *Verſ.* 6. *Their Baker ſleepeth all the night, in the morning it burneth as a flaming fire. Thirdly*, For their ſlineſs and ſubtilty, in carrying on their Wickedneſs; making, as if they minded no ſuch thing; like a *Baker*, that ſeems not to regard either his Bread, or his Oven; whereas he hath put Leaven into the one, and Fire into the other, which is all that can be done for the pre-

ſent; and, by that time the Oven is hot enough, and the Bread leavened enough, he will be ſure to wake, and fall to his Buſineſs: Moreover, *Verſ.* 8. We read this paſſage, *Ephraim is a Cake not turned*; Meaning, that as ſuch a Cake is partly bak't, and partly dough; ſo, *Ephraim* did halt betwixt *God* and *Baal*, was of ſeveral Religions, eſpouſing the Religion of thoſe divers People they lived amongſt, as the fore-going words imply; *Ephraim hath mixed himſelf amongſt the People.* Seeing then the *Holy Ghoſt* ſeemeth to ſet forth theſe *Four* things I have mentioned, by Similitudes taken from a *Baker*, and the things he deals in; it can be no wayes improper, from the Circumſtance of place, where the Fire began, *viz.* a *Bakers*-Houſe; to Meditate of thoſe Expreſſions, and to conſider, how far-forth they are applicable to our ſelves. If we have been as a *Cake but half-bak't*, if *burning like a fiery-Oven* with the heat of luſt, and in the mean time ſleeping in ſecurity, *&c.* How juſt was it with God to ſend ſuch a Fire as this upon us? Came it not to awaken us? Though *Bakers* can ſleep quietly when they have put fire in the Oven; yet, if they know there be fire on the Houſ-top, they can take no reſt; Advertiſe them of that, and they will ſtart up preſently, and indeavour to quench it. I thought fit to touch upon both theſe Circumſtances, not as pretending to know the end of God in either of them; (though he, who acteth all things according to the Counſel of his Will, hath a wiſe end; not onely in all his actings, but in all the circumſtances of them;) but rather to ſhow, that *Meditation* is a Plant, that may ſpring out of every Soil; a Fruit, that may grow upon every Tree; which may evidence, That it is not from the barrenneſs of things,

things (which are all big with matter of profitable meditation) but from the naughtineſs of our hearts that we are ſo much ſtrangers to it.

MEDITATION XXII.

Upon the great pity that ought to be extended to Londoners *ſince the fire.*

PIty, is an affection that ſhould ſcarcely be withheld from any that are in great diſtreſs and miſery; but yet is much more due to ſome, then to others. Where no miſery is, there is no room for pity, and where there is nothing but miſery to beſpeak it (as in reference to that Prodigal, who by riotous courſes brought himſelf to husks) there is no cauſe for much. But where merit and miſery go hand in hand, the greateſt yearnings of our moſt tender bowels are called for. God will not take it ill that we pity thoſe whom he thinks fit to puniſh; becauſe one of his great ends in puniſhing ſome, is that he might excite pity and compaſſion in others towards them: I have read that Sir *Thomas Moor* not long before his Execution was deſired to cut his locks, for no other end, as is believed, than leſt his Venerable hoary Fleece ſhould ſtir up too much compaſſion in thoſe that were to be ſpectators at his death. But ſo far is the great God from that, that he had rather we ſhould number the grey heirs of miſery which are upon the heads of men, in order to our pitying of them. To tell, Why the late Inhabitants of *London* are objects of Royal pity, or to move to it, were to diſcourſe, why children under great ſufferings ſhould be compaſſionated by their Parents (For

Kings are Fathers, and Subjects their Sons and Daughters). Whereas the Scripture saith, *Can a mother forget her child, that she should not have compassion on the child of her womb?* and though it adds, *yea, she may*, yet it insinuates that they seldom do or can. What reason Courtiers have to pity Citizens, were easie to allędge; For, Have not Citizens, sometimes had so much pity for them, as that they seemed to have none for themselves? Why should not Citizens be a little in Courtiers books, if some Courtiers have been and are, a great deal in theirs? It is but ingenuity to afford them pity who have given them credit. As for those that lead a Countrey life they know full well that Citizens had wont to be their best Chapmen, and to give them a good price for those commodities, and provisions which they thought too good for themselves, and withall to furnish them with the best things which they stood in need of.

Had *Londoners* been the worst of people the depth of their present misery, compared with the height of their former prosperity had challenged pity and compassion from their very enemies: but if it may be made appear that they were generally as Civil as Religious, as Charitable, and in many other respects as commendable as most people in the world, none but ill natur'd persons can refrain commiserating them, much more rejoyce and triumph in their sufferings. The worst enemies they have in the world must needs confess that no people were generally more Civil and Moral then they. As for Religion, I know there are several standards by which men measure, and judge of that (though indeed, and in truth there is but One, whereby to judge of it, to wit, the

Word

Word of God; but if conformity to the duties both of the first and second Table, if love to God and to our neighbours (so far as men can discern) may denominate persons Religious (as surely it is that must do it) pure Religion and undefiled did as much abound in *London*, as in any place whatsoever. I meddle not with charity in point of judging (Censuring is every where too common) but as for Charity in giving and ministring to those that are in want, both of one perswasion, and of another, if that be a virtue (as doubtless it is) *London* hath been as eminent for it in all times in which several parties have taken their turns in suffering as any place I know. In the space of twenty years and upwards that *England* hath been distetl'd by War, it may be thousands that by the unhappines of the times have been brought to straits and exigences, they and theirs had perished, but for the charity of *London*, more than of all other places, whilst some have taken care of the Disciples of *Paul*, others of *Apollos*, others of *Cephas*, others of *Christ* without respect to any of those distinctions (which best became good Christians); and so all have been taken care of, more or less, by those poor Citizens who are now many of them themselves become the objects of Charity. *London* will not want for pity, if it be pitied by no more then all, and only those, that first and last have been pitied and relievedby it, and that now and hereafter will dearly miss it.

I would not it should grate upon the minds of honest Citizens, undone by the fire, to think or suspect that a great many have no pity for them: All good people have, and they that are otherwise, have no pity, so much as for their own souls.

I obſerve they uſe to have moſt pity from God, who have leaſt from men, being withall ſuch as deſerve it. When *Penninah* did ſorely vex *Hannah* to make her fret, becauſe God had ſhut up her womb, *Hannah* throve the better for it; for God lookt upon her affliction, and opened her womb, when her Rival had ſhut up her bowels towards her, 1 *Sam.* 1. 5. When *Shimei* curſed *David* being at that time under trouble from *Abſalom*, *David ſaid*, *It may be the Lord will requite me good for his curſing this day*, 2 Sam. 16. 13. Such as triumph in your miſeries may do you a greater kindneſs then they are aware of, according to that in Prov. 24. 18. *Rejoyce not when thine enemy falleth, leſt the Lord ſee it, and turn away his wrath from him.* They that will not look upon you as the objects of their pity, are indeed the objects of yours; For ſo are all they that ſhew themſelves to be neither Chriſtians nor Men: and it is a good preſage, you ſhall not always want pity for that you cannot have it from a great many people whilſt you want it. Pity is that virtue which *Engliſhmen* are famous for, and therefore every *Engliſhman* that is void of it, wants the common virtue and character of his Countrey; and he that hath none to beſtow upon this occaſion, ſeems to have none at all. I know not that man that would not be loath the world ſhould think that he had no commiſeration for the preſent caſe of *London*; and why is it, but, becauſe it would thence follow, that he were of a marvellous ill nature, and unworthy of any pity to be ſhewed to himſelf, even in the greateſt extremity that could befall him. One ſaith, the reaſon why, they that have children are uſually more affectionate, than thoſe that have none

none, is, because their bowels are often called upon. By that reason they that have no pity, now when that Affection in men is so much called upon are never like to have any. But a pity like that charity which S. *James* speaks of, *Jam.* 2. 15. Is not worth half the words I have used. If a brother be naked and destitute of daily food, and one say unto him, Depart in peace, be you warmed and filled; Notwithstanding, he gives him nothing, &c. I say a pity like that charity, which yet is more then some men have, is little worth. But would men shew themselves truly compassionate, toward that desolated City, and the late miserable Inhabitants of it, if they have interest in heaven, let them pray for the reflourishing both of it, & them; if they have interest on earth, let them promote it; if they have parts let them advise and contrive how it may be effected; if they have Purses, let them contribute towards it; if they have all of these, let them further it all, and every of these ways. Call your selves Papists, Frenchmen, Hectors, any thing, but true Englishmen, true Christians, true Protestants, if you have no pity for the desolations of *London*. I doubt not but there are some Turks and Jews that have, or would have had, if they had known *London* in it's prosperity, and should now see it in it's ashes. O Lord, If men will not pity the miseries of *London*, the matter is not great; possibly if they did, it might not signifie much: onely let Thy bowels yearn towards, and thy repentings be kindled within thee, and Thou (who hast spoken concerning it, to pluck up, and pull down) speak in thy due time, to build, and to plant it.

MEDI-

MEDITATION XXV.

Upon thoſe that have loſt all by the Fire.

WHat ſhall we ſay to them that have loſt all? who tell us, that before the fire, they were worth ſo many hundreds, or, ſo many thouſands, but ſince then, they are worth nothing, yea, worſe than nothing. Surely they ought not to mourn as men without hope. If they were ſometimes as rich as *Job* was at firſt, they cannot be poorer now than he was afterwards. Hatred in God towards men, cannot be known by ſuch Events as thoſe; for *Job*, who was in like caſe, was a Perſon greatly beloved of God. Do they fear that they and theirs ſhall periſh? Not ſo neither, for rather than the Iſraelites ſhould periſh in the Wilderneſs, God gave them bread from Heaven, and waters out of the Rock. Ravens ſhall feed them, if they be ſuch as put their truſt in God, rather than they ſhall famiſh. Some, have no Children; they, it is to be ſuppoſed, may make a good ſhift: others, have bad Children, and what ſhould they do with Eſtates to ſpend upon their luſts? Others, have good Children, and let not them doubt but God will provide for them. Hath the onely wiſe God no wayes whereby to make up your loſſes? Did he not give to *Job*, double for all that which he had taken away from him? and can he not do ſo by you?

Is it your great trouble, that you have loſt all at once? I have heard of one, who having a great number of coſtly Glaſſes, did himſelf break them all at one time, that he might not be diſquieted

time

time after time, by the accidental breaking of them one by one. Had your Eſtates been taken from you by piece-meals, now a part, and then a part, till all had been conſumed, that might have proved more grievous to you; and ſo it hath fared with many men. Will you ſay, All is loſt, becauſe your Eſtates are gone? Know, he that is a Chriſtian indeed, cannot loſe his All, yea, the beſt part of what he hath, cannot be loſt, as is ſaid of *Mary*, that *ſhe had choſen that good part, which could not be taken from her.* I have heard of a good Woman, who, when her Children died, had wont to comfort herſelf with this, to wit, that The Lord liveth; who, being more than ordinarily dejected for the death of one of her Children, that ſhe had a more particular affection for; a Child that had obſerved what ſhe had wont to ſay, and how full of heavineſs ſhe then was, came to her and ſaid, Mother, Is the Lord dead? How may the words of that Child, upbraid the carriage of thoſe Chriſtians, who mourn over their loſſes, as if they had not an Everliving God to rejoyce in? Is it ſtrange to you to be poor, who have heretofore always enjoyed riches and plenty? know, that it is one point of a Chriſtians Excellency and heavenly Skill, to be able to act ſeveral and different parts well, as *Paul* ſaith, *I have learned how to abound, and how to want, how to be full, and how to be empty; how, in every Eſtate therewithall to be content.* They are unſound bodies, that can onely bear the Summer, but not alſo the Winter, Spring and Autumne. You ſay, you have nothing now, How many are there, that never had any thing, to ſpeak of? Is it no mercy or priviledge, to have enjoyed good things for a long time paſt, though we may not enjoy them alwayes?

wayes? If men have had good ſight, good hearing, good health, till they come to be old, and then all of theſe begin to decay, or be quite loſt, do they, or ought they, to reckon it no mercy that they have enjoyed theſe things ſo long? If you ſay, you cannot live upon nothing (that is, nothing certain) how many hundreds, yea, thouſands, are, thorough the goodneſs of God, provided for from year to year, who have no certainty to live upon? Now you have loſt the things you had, poſſibly you will thereby be excited, to look after the things which can never be loſt, which otherwiſe, it may be, you had never done. Hath the fire conſumed your money, or money-worth, as if it had all been but ſo much droſs, this, peradventure, may make you look after that gold, tried in the fire, which no fire can conſume, and then, your unſpeakable loſs will prove inconceivable gain. What great difference, between the worlds leaving us, and our leaving it? You muſt ſhortly have left it, if it had not firſt left you.

Truſt God, and doubt not but he will bear your charges thorough the world, and more of this world you need not care for. What a noiſe will this make in the world, that you have loſt all, and who, that hath any thing to ſpare, if they know your caſe, will not contribute to your relief? You have yet the Love of relations and friends, the Charity of men, the Fruit of your own ingenuity, and induſtry, the Bounty of heaven, the Reſult of Divine Promiſes, all theſe things you have, beſides ſeveral others, to help and ſuccour you; therefore, ſay not, You are undone, though all be loſt for the preſent. How many have, from a fair Eſtate, been brought to a morſel of Bread,

not

not by Caſualty, but by Crimes, ſuch as God might have left you to, as by that *fire* which, *Job* ſaith, *will conſume to deſtruction, and root out all a mans increaſe*, *Job* 31. 12. Now conſider, how much better your condition is than theirs. Are you as thoſe that have nothing, think of the Apoſtles words, 2 *Cor.* 6. 10. *As having nothing, yet poſſeſſing all things.* If, either you are true Believers, or ſhall hereafter be ſuch, thoſe words of the ſame Apoſtle will be verified in you, 1 *Cor.* 3. 21. *All things are yours, ye are Chriſts, and Chriſt is Gods.*

MEDITATION XXIV.

Upon thoſe that have loſt but half their Eſtates by this Fire, or ſome ſuch proportion.

WHat a mercy is it, that you have loſt but half, when ſo many others have loſt all? How much better is half a Loaf, as our Proverb ſpeaks, than no Bread? As *David* ſaid to *Mephiboſheth*, *Thou and Ziba divide*; ſo hath God decided the caſe, betwixt the fire and you. You are, at moſt, but like *David*'s Servants, the one half of whoſe Beards were ſhaven by *Hanan*, and their Garments cut in the middle. How much better is it, to ſhave one Arm, than none; to have but one Eye, than to be ſtark blind? The man that was wounded, and left but half dead, recovered again, by the help and favour of the good Samaritan; and ſo may you. Poſſibly, that half or part which is left you, is more than many mens All: Your Gleanings better than the Vintage of many others. The Ancients ran much upon ſuch a ſaying as this, *Dimidium plus toto*, that *half was better then the whole*, meaning

meaning, the former with quietneſs and contentment, was much better then the latter without it. God can give you twice ſo much contentment with half ſo much Eſtate. If you ſay, and ſay truly, that you had ſcarce enough before, and now have but half ſo much as you had then; there are that have more by half then they needed, and how knoweſt thou but God may incline them to conſider thee who haſt ſcarce half enough?

But, Oh! the miſerable world in which many whoſe cup overflows will let others have nothing of theirs, if they have but ſomething of their own, though that ſomething be next to nothing. If men that have ten children have but enough to maintain one, are they no objects of pity and charity? If a man have doublet and breeches ſuch as may ſerve his turn, but neither hat to his head, nor ſhoos to his feet, will you not commiſerate him? Did the good *Samaritane* overlook the man he met because he was but half dead? did he ſtay till he were ready to give up the ghoſt before he would do any thing for him? This is the manner of but too many men: but the comfort is, your heavenly Father he knows whereof you ſtand in need. Whether the moiety of what thou ſometimes hadſt be, or be not enough for thy occaſions, Bleſs God for it. That will be the way to have it multiplied as thoſe loaves were with which Chriſt fed five thouſand to the full. Try, what double induſtry, double frugality will do towards eaking out that allowance that ſeems to fall ſhort; and above all concluſions, try, if doubling thy faith and confidence in God will not double thy maintenance if need require. Learn to think, that God did not grudge thee the whole, but hath therefore retrencht

retrencht thee, as thou art retrencht, becauſe he knew, that but half was better for thee.

MEDITATION XXV.

Upon thoſe that loſt nothing by the Fire.

HOw well came you off? not ſo much as a hair of your head ſindged, not ſo much as the ſmell of fire about you. I cannot call you brands ſnatcht out of the fire, for you were better than ſo; brands are partly burnt, ſo were not you. Fall down and adore that diſtinguiſhing-mercy, which hath ſo preſerved you, and made a hedge about you. Alas! if all had been great loſers, how ſhould one have been able to help another, whereas now ſome are able to ſuccor others, if they be but as willing. God is trying you what good Stewards you will be of thoſe Talents, which he hath continued to you full and whole, whileſt others are either totally deprived of theirs, or at leaſtwiſe much diminiſhed. He expects you ſhould make yourſelves poorer (for the preſent) by your Charity, though he hath not made you ſo by the Fire; and woe be to you, if you do it not. He could have forced all your Eſtates from you, as he did from others; but, he thought fit to prove you, as to what you would part with freely. He would ſee what influence that Text hath upon you, *He that hath this worlds goods, and ſeeth his brother in want, and ſhuts up his bowels of compaſſion, How dwelleth the love of God in him?*

Think not, that all that is left you, is left you for yourſelves; for it is no ſuch matter: It is, that you ſhould diſperſe and give to the poor, that your

righteousness may remain. You are but Feoffees in trust for others, as to some good proportion of what is continued with you. I expect, God will cast fire upon your houses next, if you cast not your bread upon the waters: Charity may secure what you enjoy, and the want of it may hazard all. It might have been your lot to have stood in need of receiving; and, now you are left able to give (which is a more blessed thing) will you not do it? All that was saved from the fire was given you again, and will you not lend God a part, who hath given you the whole? and what is that lending to God, but giving to the Poor? God hath been tender of your Tabernacles, and will not you be kind to his living Temples? They that were sent to fetch the Ass that Christ was to ride upon, were bid to say, *The Lord had need of him.* Now, if ever, hath Christ need to borrow of those that are able, as in reference to his poor members; and woe to them that can, and will not lend to their Lord and Saviour. He could supply them otherwise, without being beholden to you; but it is your love he values more than your liberality, and the latter but as an Expression of the former. It is not so much *A gift which he desireth, as fruit that may abound to your own account*, as the Apostle speaks, *Phil.* 4.17. You may pretend you are thankful for the great Deliverance vouchsafed you, but neither God, nor Men, will believe you are so, unless you be also Charitable to them that were not Delivered.

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MEDITATION XXVI.

Upon those that were Gainers by the late Fire.

WE say, It is an evil wind, that blows no body any good. Some were honest gainers, (and much good may it do them); others dishonest. Some could not let their Tenements before the fire, who have since, let them for moderate Rents; such are honest gainers: Others have let their houses at most excessive Rates, and such have loaded themselves with dishoneſt gain. But be their gains one way or another, I think no man ought, for the present, to pocket the money which he hath clearly gotten by the fire, (if it be so they can spare it). *David* would not drink of the waters of *Bethlehem* which were brought to him, because, as he said, They were the price of Blood, meaning, his Souldiers had ventured their lives for it: What men have gotten by this fire, is little lesse than the price of Blood, considering how many were impoverished that a few might be inriched, or rather, that the inriching of but a very few, is by the undoing of many thousands.

Men may look upon their gains by this fire, as *Dodates*: Let as many as are able be their own Almoners, and give it back to God. Is it not a Sabbatical year (in a doleful sense) for that the poor City now injoyeth it's Sabbath? and in a Sabbatical year that did bear a better interpretation, the rich were not suffered to reap, but were to leave the Crop to the poor, as appeareth, by comparing, *Exod.* 23. 11. with *Levit.* 25. 5. If men who have only saved what they had before, ought

to contribute to them that have loſt? how much more ought they, who have received an Addition by this very means? To Build upon the Ruines of others, is one of the worſt Foundations that can be. Let it never be ſaid, The fire hath made you rich, whilſt ſuch multitudes continue poor, miſerably poor, whom meerly the fire hath made ſo. We uſe to ſay, Men have gotten thoſe things out of the fire, which they came hardly by. But what men got by, or out of, the late fire, was eaſily come by; well may it go leightly, for it leightly came, yet neither doth that go leightly, which goes to the uſe of Charity. When I conſider, how this fire which hath ruined many, hath raiſed ſome, it brings to mind what is ſaid, *Luke* 1. 52. *He hath put down the mighty from their ſeats, and exalted them of low degree. He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he hath ſent empty away.* How ſtrangely, and by ſeeming contraries, doth the providence of God bring things to paſs, that when a diſmall fire hapned, ſome men ſhould be made by it! So a Priſon made way for *Joſeph*'s preferment; and *Oneſimus* his running away from his Maſter, for his returning to God and to himſelf, and a better Servant to his Maſter than ever. An Eſtate caſt upon men by the deſolating Fire, ſounds like ſuch a Riddle as that of *Sampſon*, *Out of the eater came meat, and out the ſtrong came ſweetneſs*: Is it not as a Honey-comb found in the Carcaſe of a Lion? You whom God by this fire hath unexpectedly enabled more than ever, to eat the Fat and drink the Sweet (you know what I allude to) ſee that you ſend portions to them for whom nothing is provided.

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MEDITATION XXVII.

Upon the Inducements unto re-building of London, *and ſome wayes of promoting it.*

THat *London* ſhould be re-built, is ſo much the concern of *England*, both in point of Honour and of Trade, as hardly any thing can be more. Whilſt that lieth in the duſt, our Glory lieth with it. Our Enemies rejoice to ſee it where it is: but ſhould we let it lie there long, Oh! how would they ſcorn us for it, and conclude, it were becauſe we had not wherewithall to build it up again. They know, as well as we, that there is no part of *England* ſituate ſo commodiouſly for Trade as *London* is; which name is ſaid to ſignifie in the Language of the Britains (it's firſt Inhabitants) *Shipton*, or a Town of Ships; in regard, that the famous River which runs by the ſide of it, is able to entertain the greateſt Ships that can ride upon the Sea, which thing hath made it ſo famous a Mart; thoſe Ships bringing in all the rich commodities the world can afford. Hence *London* for ſo many Ages paſt, hath held it's Primacy over all other parts of *England*, and none hath been thought fit to ſucceed it in that dignity, though the ſhifting of Trade from one City to another, and an alternate Superlativeneſs hath been frequent in other parts of the world, where one place hath been as commodious as another. But *London* never had rival that did, or could pretend it's ſelf as fit to make the great Emporium and Metropolis of *England* as was it's ſelf. The River of *Thames* made it ſo at firſt; and that, under God, will and muſt make it ſo

again. It perished by fire, and must be saved by water; for, that, if any thing, will make it once again what it was before, as *Job* saith of a Tree, onely the Root whereof is left in the ground, that thorough the scent of water, it will sprout again. How venerable is *London*, were it but for its Antiquity, of which *Ammianus Marcellinus* reports, that it was called an ancient City in his time, which was above twelve hundreds years ago; and *Cornelius Tacitus* seems to do the like, three hundred years before him, telling us, that, for multitudes of Merchants and Commerce, *London* was very renowned, fifteen hundred years ago: nor can we suppose it to have presently arrived at that perfection. Who would not assist the building of another City in that place, hoping it may continue as many Ages as the other did, and longer too, if God be pleased to prevent the like disaster. I confess, I love not to hear men boast at such a time as this what they will do, or what shall be done, as to the building of *London* more glorious than ever. The Inhabitants of *Samaria* are blamed for saying, *The Bricks are fallen down, but we will build with hewn Stones; the Sycamores are cut down, but we will change them into Cedars.* We are but putting on our harness, as to re-building; let us not boast, as if we were putting of it off: This is not a time in which to say much, though it becomes us to do all we can. If we may see but such another City it will be a great mercy, but one more glorious than that we may scarce expect till we see it. Alas! how many difficulties is that work clogg'd with? How scarce and dear are all materials? How poor are many that desire to build? How hard, and almost impossible will it be, to satisfie the Interest of all proprietors?

proprietors? Amongſt all the Models that are preſented for that purpoſe, How hard will it be to know how to pitch upon that which may be moſt convenient? If we build every where, as before, it will be incommodious for Paſſage, dangerous for Fire; if by a new Platform, it is hard not to be injurious to multitudes of People, whoſe Houſes ſtood inconveniently, as to the Publick: Lord, Give our Senators double and treble wiſdom, that they may be ſatisfactory-Repairers of ſo great breaches.

But, How ſhall Moneys be Levied for the re-building of *London*, where the Eſtates of perſons concerned do fall ſhort? Two Expedients for that I have propounded already; One was, by the Mercy and Charity of thoſe perſons who have loſt little or nothing by the fire; and, who have ſomething they could well ſpare: The other is, By the Juſtice and due Repentance of all thoſe perſons, Carters, Landlords, and others, who have raiſed uncoſcionable gains to themſelves, by means of the late Fire; whoſe duty it is, to reſtore, not only the principal of what they have unlawfully gotten by the fire, but ſome certain over-plus, as was provided under the Law, in caſes of *Reſtitution*: When that is done, I wiſh there were a certain Pole-fine, or Mulct, ſet upon the head of every common ſin, not made capital; which additional-Pole, levied upon all perſons that are able, when once convicted of Drunkenneſs, Swearing, Couſenage, Curſing, yea Lying its ſelf, might be for, and towards the re-building of *London*: I ſpeak of an Additional pecuniary Puniſhment for thoſe Crimes, both for that the former and preſent Mulcts have not been ſufficient to reſtrain Men; as alſo, for that great ſumms are ſtill in arrear to

Justice; because those kind of Penalties have been but seldom inflicted, possibly not one time in a hundred that they ought to have been. To do this, were not to build *London* upon the sins of the People, (as some will object;) but upon the punishment of Sin, and due execution of Justice, which would be a glorious foundation. If but one shilling extraordinary were levied upon men *toties quoties*; that is, so often as they are, or might be, convicted for any of the fore-mentioned sins: How noble a City might those Fines build, if men should continue so bad as now they are? Whilst some particular persons, (and those able enough to pay for it) stick not to swear hundreds of Oaths in one day, besides all the Execrations and Lies they become guilty of in one day. But, if men had rather reform themselves, than by their Crimes help to rebuild the City, the former shall be as welcom as the latter; and, the latter may, in one sense, be promoted by the former. But, if that way of raising Money be so happily prevented, possibly so soon as God shall please to turn our *Swords into Plowshares, and* our *Spears into Pruning-hooks*: The Wisdom of our Governors may think fit to make some coercive-levy, for once, towards the relieving of friends, as they have formerly done; for, and towards the humbling of Forraign-Enemies: and, as the Ruin of *London* is a National-Calamity, so, Who knows whether our Rulers may not please to make the re-building of it somewhat of a National-Charge? as it would certainly be an honour, and an advantage to the whole Nation: But, remembring what is said, *Psal.* 127. 1. *Except the Lord build the house,* (and so the City,) *they labour in vain that build it*: I cannot but further consider

what

what words we ſhould take unto our ſelves, where-with to plead with God, that *London* (if it ſo ſeem good to him,) may be built again? And, May we not plead thus? O Lord, How many hundred Families are there, whoſe livelihoods ſeem to depend upon the re-building of that City? What hard ſhift do they make in the mean-time, dwelling many of them like the *Iſraelites*, in Tents or Bothes? Were not many of theſe good and merciful men? And, Haſt thou not ſaid, *That with the Merciful thou wilt ſhow thy ſelf Merciful*? How many are there, whoſe bowels yearn, and whoſe hearts bleed over the deſolations of *London*? Shall Men pity them, and will not God much more, who is of infinite compaſſions? What ſtrong affections have theſe poor hearts for the place where that City ſometimes ſtood? How do they cleave, as it were, to the Ruins of it? How loth are they to remove at any diſtance from it, as if they could ſettle to no buſineſs any where elſe, no more than *Iriſh*-Kine, which, as they ſay, cannot give down their Milk, unleſs their Calves, or ſomething in their likeneſs ſtand by their ſides: How do their Enemies, yea, and thine alſo, inſult and triumph, whilſt poor *London* lieth in aſhes; ſaying, *Aha, Aha*, ſo would we have it? Shall *London* be alwayes a Ruinous Heap, whilſt *Rome*, and *Paris*, continue flouriſhing Cities? Haſt thou not a greater *Controverſie* with them than with it? Doſt thou ſuffer them to ſtand? (not that we beg the deſtruction of any place,) Wilt not thou permit *London* to riſe again? Shall *England* never be like its ſelf again? or, How can it be ſo, if *London* be no more? Was ever the Reſtauration of a City more prayed for, and ſhall all thoſe Prayers fall to the ground? Lord,

What

What joy will there be, when the re-building of *London* shall be once finished? How will the top-Stone be laid with Acclamations of Grace, Grace, Psal. 71. 20. *Thou, who hast showed that place and People great and sore troubles, vouchsafe to quicken them again, and bring them up again from the depths of the Earth: Increase their greatness, and comfort them on every side.*

MEDITATION XXVIII.

Upon the Wines and Oils that swam in the Streets, and did augment the Flames.

I Have heard, that upon some great Solemnities, the Conduits have been made to run with Claret: But, so much precious Wine and Oyl, as ran down the Kennels upon this sad occasion, was never known to do so before: Then was *London* a burning Lamp, flaming with its own Oyl; But, worse than the wasting of those Wines and Oyls themselves was their unhappy mixing with that water; which some, not well considering, made use of, to throw upon the flames; and, thereby in stead of extinguishing, did increase them.

Oh the hurtfulness even of costly Mixtures in some cases, Water alone had done well; but, Wine and Oyl added to it did a world of mischief: So in *Baptism*, Water alone doth as well as can be, (suiting the Institution;) but, to add Cream, and Spittle, is both sinful, slovenly, and ridiculous: But, O nasty beasts! Why do you use Spittle above all the rest? VVould you imitate that Miracle whereby the *eyes of the blind-man were opened with Spittle.* for one thing? Why then do you not use Clay too? But, you are better at making *Seers.*

blind,

blind, than *blind-Folks ſee*: Or, is it from the great commendation which you have heard of Faſting-Spittle, (in many other caſes,) that you uſe Spittle in this? Away with your unwarranted-mixtures, (beaſtly ones eſpecially,) you make me digreſs from a ſerious Subject, to anſwer Fools according to their folly; But, I'le return again.

Oh, How did all things at that time conſpire to make poor *London* miſerable? Not only did the Streets and Kennels drink freely of their beſt Wines and Oyls, but alſo made the Fire to pledge them, till it became outragious, like a man-in-drink. Drunkards may read their ſin in their puniſhment: God hath inflamed their City with Wine, wherewith they had wont to inflame themſelves: God threatned the *Jews*, Hoſ. 2. *That he would take from them his Wine, and his Oyl, which they had prepared for Baal*; and, Why not yours, which you had prepared for *Bacchus*? What an Argument is it of your unworthineſs, that God ſhould give theſe good creatures to the Flames, rather than to your Selves?

MEDITATION XXIX.

Upon the water running down hill ſo faſt that they could not ſtop it for their uſe.

DId not the water make more haſte than good ſpeed; when it ran down-hill with ſuch a force that they could hardly make any dams to ſave it? *Ariſtotle's* deſcription of Water, is but ſlight who deſcribes it by this, that it can hardly be contained within it's own bounds, *vix continetur*

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in ſuis terminis, facile in alienis, but this ſad occaſion may make us think of it; for it was found very difficult to ſtop it in it's career: yet I think the main reaſon was it's running down ſo great and ſteep precipices, rather then it's natural extravagancy, and aptneſs to tranſgreſs it's bounds. But let the cauſe be what it will, that which I would obſerve is, that by overdoing, it undid; it came not at all or not conſiderably to their help and aid becauſe it came too faſt. So, blood and ſpirits flowing too faſt to any part of the body that is miſ-affected (as to the ſide in a pleuriſie) give no relief but do hurt. How good were it, if men knew when and where to ſtop? He was a wiſe man (though he called himſelf a ſimple Cobler) who adviſed that men would unload on this ſide *Munſter*, and take heed of overthrowing *Charles* his Wain: Nor was he a fool that obſerved, that ſome men make ſo much haſte out of *Babylon* that they run beyond *Jeruſalem*. There is no good Muſick to be made, unleſs men will keep their due Stops.

MEDITATION XXX.

Upon mens being unwilling there ſhould be no fire, though fire hath done ſo much hurt.

After all the miſchief that fire hath done in the world, firſt & laſt, none would be content there ſhould be no ſuch thing as fire. Though ſometimes we are the worſe for it, yet it would be worſe for us to be always without it. The uſe of things that are greatly uſeful ought not to be taken away, becauſe they have been abuſed, or may be ſo. For by that reaſon the Scripture might be

withheld from the common people, or denied them in their mother-tongue, because some passages in the Epistles of *Paul*, have been wrested by ignorant people to their own destruction. And by the same reason there should be no Universities, because some, with the learning they have there received, have contended not for, but against the truth: yea, no Preaching, because some have done more hurt then good in their Pulpits; Yea, upon that account, men might declame against Christ himself; For that Christ hath been, and will be to some a stumbling-stone, and a Rock of offence, and saith of himself, that, in one sense *He came not to send peace upon the earth, but a sword.*

They that would banish all good things out of the world have ever argued from this very Topick that such and such things have at one time or other done hurt, and may do so again; so hath fire when they resolve to abandon it, and never use it more: then, and not till then, shall I believe they are true to their principles. When the use of things is greater than the abuse, but especially when, and where the abuse of good things may be effectually provided against, to suppress the use of them, is a thing that can never be answered.

MEDITATION XXXI.

Upon the usefulness of fire in it's proper place, and the danger of it elsewhere.

Fire on a safe Hearth, or in a good Furnace, or Oven, how useful is it? What almost can be done

done without it? Yet what more pernicious than the same fire, if it chance to burn where it should not. Some have expressed it thus, that *Fire is a good Servant but a bad Master. Solomon* saith, *Light is good, and it is pleasant to behold the Sun.* The same is true of Fire, especially in the Winter time which we use to commend by the name of a fine *Sunny-bank*. But if it happen to get into a reek of hay, or into a stack, or field of Corn, or into the Timber of a house: Oh! What work doth it oft-times make? Men have their proper places assigned them by God, as well as Fire. In case they be of nimble active and fiery Spirits, let them but keep within their bounds, and they will do no hurt. Yea, the livelinesse of their spirits may inable them to do the more good. But if servants once come to ride on Horse-back, and make their Masters go on foot; if inferiours will become the head, and make their Superiours the tail; if young *Phaetons* will get into the Chariot of the Sun, nothing but mischief and confusion can insue. How good is the Apostle's advice *Every man wherein he is called, therein let him abide with God.*

MEDITATION XXXII.

Upon the Blowing up of Houses.

METhinks that saying concerning *Babylon* is very dismall: *Happy is he that shall take thy children and dash their brains against the stones.* Next to the dolefulness of that time, seems to be the misery of that sad season in which men rose up & called them blessed, who would do that good office, as

to

to blow up their houses, lest they and many more should perish together. Did we ever think that a time would come, when men would beg, and intreat that not only their neighbours houses might be blown up, but their own also, and count themselves beholden to them that would do it? God's ways in Judgements, as well as Mercies, are above ours, as far as the heavens are above the earth. I cannot but think, what a name that way of Blowing-up-houses hath gotten; how much it is applauded and how much men lament that it was either not considered or not permitted sooner. We are thankful to men that do us good, though by harshest remedies, and why should we not be so to God, when he is pleased to teach us obedience to himself, though it be by briars and thorns (as *Gideon* taught the men of *Succoth*); when he prevents or abates our pride, though it be by sending a messenger of Sathan to buffet us. But how quickly was a great and stately House, first blown up, and then laid flat upon the ground? It was but as it were a flash of lightning, then a clap of thunder, then one jumpt upwards (as if it had been that it might take the greater Fall); then a great smoak, and presently all was in the dust. Scarce could a strong hand have sooner shuck in pieces the rotten branches of an old worm-eaten tree; yea, scarcely could it have made the over-ripe fruit of a tender plant (as it might be the Vine) to fall sooner to the ground then many goodly Fabricks by the irresistible force of Gun-powder were shaken to pieces, and presently laid in the dust.

How easie is the dissolution of any earthly thing? The way of making things is as it were up-hill; men puff and blow at it, and are out of breath,

breath, and muſt take time. But deſtruction is a precipice. Things no ſooner begin to tumble from the top, but they are preſently at the bottom of that hill. Gun-powder it's ſelf is the moſt eaſily ruined, and deſtroyed of any thing; Thouſands of Barrels if they lie together may be blown up by means of one ſpark, and yet no earthly creature ſo able to deſtroy as is Gun-powder; ſo that it ſhould ſeem nothing, is more Paſſive, and yet nothing more active then that. So have I obſerved amongſt men that none are ſo apt to ruine others as thoſe that are moſt apt to ruine or be ruined themſelves. As deſtructive a thing as Gun-powder is, did we not owe the preſervation of what was preſerved to that under God, and to them that had the courage to uſe it, more then to any thing elſe. Sometimes there is no way to ſave the moſt but by deſtroying a part; ſo that high Prieſt propheſied, that it was of neceſſity that one ſhould die for the people, though other-whiles if you deſtroy any, you can ſave none, as *Paul* told them that were with him, Except theſe abide in the ſhip you cannot be ſaved. Men skilful to deſtroy, if they knew when to uſe their faculty, and when to forbear it, might be very ſerviceable; foraſmuch, as deſtruction in part, is ſometimes the only way to deliverance; as there is no way to ſave the life of a man that hath a Gangered Limb, unleſs you cut it off.

But, Why was this way of blowing up Houſes no ſooner thought of, (being ſo effectual as it is)? nothing could be more obvious; but God is wont to blind thoſe whom he intends to ruine. *Quos Jupiter perdere vult, dementat*: We read, that *The men of might have not found their hands*, Pſal. 76. 5. and, if not their hands, what could they find? But,

Was

Was this way timely thought of? Was it motioned, and would it not be hearkned to? That is more than I know: But, if it were so, the cause was either vain Commiseration; thinking, What pity it was, to Blow up here and there a House; not considering, How much better it was to do so, than to let the whole City perish: Better one *Jonas* be thrown over-board, than the whole Ship be cast away. Thus, some Physicians destroy their Patients, by not admitting of more generous, though more venturous Medicines, when the Disease is such, as will not be played, or dallied with. Or Timerousness might be the cause: They might fear to be called in question for giving way to the Blowing up of Houses: But, Magistrates should overlook private Concerns, when they are satisfied what will be for publick Good. Some perhaps do judge, it proceeded from *Covetousness, the root of all evil.* But, Who is so covetous, as to let a Ship and all its Fraught be lost, rather than throw a part of its Lading into the Sea, whereby to secure the rest? More attribute it to carelessness, security, and presumption; as thinking those flames much more easily extinguishable than indeed they were; and that they might *draw waters enough out of their own Cisterns* (to allude to *Prov.* v. 15.) wherewith to put it out; which is a modester phrase then is said to have been used in the case. It is a very weak Cordial, that some, it may be, do comfort themselves withal, viz. That, if ever *London* be first Built, and then Fir'd again, in any part of it, they will not fail to Blow up Houses in good time: Now the Steed is stoln, be sure to shut the Stable-door. But, I shall conclude this *Meditation* with my best wishes; That, if the will of God be so, we may

never hear more the *sound of the Trumpet, and the Alarm of War*; nor yet (which is to many more dreadful than the former) the doleful noise of Blowing up of Houses.

MEDITATION XXXI.

Upon preventing the beginning of Evils.

HOw good is it to take things in time, to meet a Disease, as the *Poet* phraseth it; *Venienti occurrere morbo*; How many complain, at first, of nothing but a Cold; that cold turns to a Feaver; that feaver from Benigne to Malignant; and, that Malignity ends in Death. Sometimes the scratch of a Pin, not seasonably looked after, Festers and Gangrenes, and doth cost men their Lives. Most Men think, that, if to effectual means, as were used at last, had been known at first, at least-wise considered; or rather, if not only known and considered of, but also resolved upon, and prosecuted; that Fire, which, at last, carried all before it, had been stifled, as it were, in its Cradle. But alas! for poor Man-kind, it is generally one aggravation of their miseries, that some way was made for their escape, and they were not sensible of it till it was too late: Not encountring a danger at the first, ordinarily springs from despising of it; which so do, is a very evil and an impolitick thing: For usually, the greatest things have but small beginnings; and that Cloud, which at first is no bigger than a *hand-breadth*, may spread, till it cover all the face of heaven. *How great a flame doth a little fire kindle*, as the *Holy-Ghost* speaks by St. *James*. It is ill presuming, that things will constantly succeed so well

as

as generally they do; Fires have ordinarily been quenched without blowing up of Houses, but it would not be so in this case.

Therefore it is good to suspect, and provide against the worst, as careful Women do for a Quinsey, and give a remedy against it, when their Children have but a sore-throat: though many sore-throats never end in a Quinsey. *Abundans cautela non nocet*: If we prepare for the worst, and it prove otherwise, the best will help it self. I shall live in hope, that after so great a Warning given, none will hereafter be *Epimetheus*, or offer to play an after-Game; but will apply themselves to the remedying of Evils at their first coming. *Solomon* speaking concerning Anger, saith, *The beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water; therefore leave off strife before it be medled with al*, Prov. 17. 14. When Waters have begun to make a breach in those Banks which should have kept them in, there is like to be such an inundation as will bear down all before it; which Comparison is applicable to many more evils besides strife and contention. Remedies too late applied, (like letting of blood in a Feaver, when the time for it is past,) do more hurt than good. For Citizens, to forbear carrying out their Goods, that they might attend upon quenching the Fire, when it was past quenching, by any thing that they could do, (how well soever intended,) was but to stay, and look on, whilst their Goods burnt; and, to increase the flames, as well as their own grief and losse by the burning of them. I say again, Let men hence learn to take things in time; Remember *Esau*, of whom we read, *Heb.* 12. 17. How that afterward, when he *would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place of*

repentance, (viz. in his father, for having given it away from him,) *though he sought it carefully with tears.* In the same words that *Christ* lamented *Jerusalem*, give me leave to lament *London*, and say, *O that thou hadst known, in this thy day, the things that had concerned thy Peace*: yea, let me add, Whensoever another day of Grace, and for prevention of evil, shall come, (as indeed the present time, though in a more spiritual sense, is such a Day,) *May we then know the things that concern our peace, before they be hid from our eyes.*

MEDITATION XXXII.

Upon the City-Ministers, whose Churches were saved from the Fire.

GIve a reason, if you can, Why your Churches were not burnt, as well as were the most of your Brethrens? Why was an Ark provided for you, (whose number was scarce twice eight,) when all the Ministers of *London* besides were (as such) swept away by that Deluge of Fire, (if I may so call it,) which did then overflow? Were you the only *Noahs* that were in the Old World? Were there no Preachers of Righteousness but your selves? or, Did you help to build that Ark, which saved you, as *Noah* did? I dare engage for you, You have more humility and modesty than to think any such thing: You are convinced, God made a difference where he found none. You hate in this case, to say, *Ego me ipsum discrevi.* You know, no account is to be given of it; But *that God will have mercy on whom he will have mercy.* God who acteth all things according to the Counsel

Counſel of His own Will, hath reaſons for every thing he doth, but we are not worthy to know them. To be ſure, thoſe I did mention were none of them.

What a diſtinguiſhing mercy is it, that you have both ſheep and folds, when other Shepherds have neither folds nor ſheep; their folds are burnt, their ſheep are ſcatter'd. Me-thinks it is time, All ſhops of meat are ſhut up, only here, and there one, that hath gotten a licenſe, and what a thing is it, that one of thoſe licenſes ſhould fall to your ſhare, there being ſo few of them as are? When there were Ninty ſeven Churches ſtanding in *London*, had you heard a ſuſpenſion was coming forth (for what reaſon you could not tell) againſt all but twelve or ſixteen of thoſe Ninty ſeven Miniſters, could you have imagined that each of you ſhould have been one of that priviledged number, or as the Diſciples of Chriſt askt him one by one when he told them one ſhould betray him *Maſter is it I*? So would not you have askt, Am not I, one of thoſe that are to be ſuſpended, and in caſe it had proved otherwiſe how thankful would you have been? Such is your caſe now. Others have loſt, and you have gained; Others have no Congregations, and yours are greater then ever (and look like gathered Churches made up of people collected out of ſeveral parts and Pariſhes) which now come to hear you. You have received ſingular favour; doth not God expect you ſhould do ſome ſingular thing? As Chriſt ſaid to his Diſciples, What ſingular thing do you? Will you not think yours ſelves bound to ſhine with double and treble ſo much light as formerly (if you can poſſibly) now that there are ſo few publick Lights

left to shine in this part of the firmament. Pray, that the spirit of *Elias* may be doubled upon you now that so many *Elias's* (as you your selves accounted them) are taken away by that fiery Chariot I have been speaking of. If you see such multitudes in your respective Churches as you never saw there before, have compassion on them as Christ had, and labour to send them away well fed, and satisfied. Your lips are now to preserve knowledge for many more than they had wont to do; The fire hath given you a kind of Monopoly for preaching in these parts, and therefore you must needs have the more Auditors; Forfeit not your Patent. I was a stranger to several of you, but others of you I knew, whom I believe to be honest and ingenuous men, partly for whose sake I am glad that those Candlesticks are still in being, which did and do contain so serviceable Lights. As *Noah* being saved from the deluge, did greatly help to increase the world; so, may you adde daily to the Church *such as shall be saved*; and then the worst I wish you, is, that a blessing from heaven may attend your labours.

MEDITATION XXXIII.

Upon those Ministers whose Churches were burnt.

THere was cause to fear some years since that Churches might be demolished, not generally by fire (for of that there was no mistrust), but by those whom the Scripture compares to water, *viz.* A rude multitude, I mean of deluded and sick-brain people, who pretended that all Ministers, and their legal Maintenance were Anti-

christi-

christian, Churches places of Spiritual whoredom; and could as willingly have pulled them down, as if they had been so many Brothel-houses. Was it any thing but a pretence? could they think as they spake? I should hardly believe men could be so mistaken, but that Christ foretold some would think they should do God good service, even in killing his Prophets: and *Paul* tells us, that when time was he verily thought he ought to do many things against Jesus of *Nazareth*. They that thought it their duty to oppose and vilifie the places called Churches, would probably have taken it for as great an honour to have demolished them themselves, as others might to have burnt them; but he that sits in heaven would not gratifie their ambition, but put that work into the hand of the fire to do, which could no ways glory or triumph in it when it was done. But that which I am now to discourse of, is not, by whom but upon whom this Calamity came, *viz.* Concerning the Ministers whose Churches were burnt. Now far be it from me and others to think that they were greater sinners then other Ministers whose Churches stand to this day. I cannot forget what Christ saith, *Luk.* 13. 4. *Suppose ye that those upon whom the tower of Siloam fell, and slew them, were sinners above all men that dwelt at Jerusalem; I tell you nay, but except you repent ye shall all likewise perish.* Had these Ministers made Cock-pits of their Pulpits (as some elsewhere have done); had they, like *those toes of the clown foot, which consisted partly of Iron, and partly of clay,* (to allude to *Dan.* 2. 4.) come thither to trample upon Magistracy and Ministery, in such railing Language as some that I have heard; had they thence, *like mad men, cast firebrands, arrows and*

death, Prov. 26. 18. truly, for that time, their Churches might have been ſpared; but ſuch we e the labours of ſeveral of them, as will certainly be miſſed.

Neither can I chuſe, but reflect how dearly ſome of them (as is probable) will miſs their Livings, ſuch I mean as have Wives and Children, and little or nothing to live upon, but what came in that way; Few men make a worſe ſhift in the world than Schollars, eſpecially Miniſters when put out of their courſe; They that have lived as it were out of the world, can worſt of all skill how to live in it. Swords may be beaten into Ploughſhares, ſo cannot Books; Moreover the liberalneſs, and ingenuouſneſs of the Education of Schollars makes them greater objects of pity than many others are, when poverty overtakes them. It is pity, that they who deſire to live, that they may ſtudy, ſhould be put upon ſtudying little elſe, but how to live. One half years time, without the help of a Living, may ſo pinch ſome honeſt Miniſters, who have great Families, as that they can ſcarcely bear it. They may have hope, the graſs will grow again, but they fear, leſt mean time the Steed ſhould ſtarve. What ſhall be done for thoſe Miniſters whom only the fire hath ſequeſtred? How ſhall they be provided for? There is a ſaying of Chriſt in *Luk.* 3. 11. which, Analogically applied and practiſed, might go a great way, and it is this, *He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none, & he that hath meat let him do likewiſe.*

But that which I have more hope of, is, that the Nobility and Gentry of *England*, who either have or ſhortly may have good Livings to diſpoſe of, will lay to heart, how many worthy *Labourers ſtand*

idle

idle in the Market-place ſince the Fire, becauſe there is none to ſet them on work; and will uſe their beſt indeavours that they may be *ſent forth into Gods Vineyard.* What God ſaith of *Joſhuah* the *High-Prieſt*, Zach. 3. 2. *Is not this a brand pluckt out of the Fire?* is, me-thinks applicable to thoſe Miniſters whoſe Churches were burnt, and themſelves ſpared; (for what is a Brand, but a ſtick partly burnt, and partly unburnt); Now, as God was pleaſed to adde concerning *Joſhua*, *Take away the filthy garments from him, and I will clothe him with change of raiments.* Some ſuch thing in a Moral ſenſe, ſhould the ſeveral Patrons in *England*, reſolve to do for thoſe able Miniſters, whoſe Churches were conſumed, *viz.* To inveſt them with Livings worthy of them, and ſuffer them no longer, as it were, *to wear ſackcloth, and to lie in aſhes.* The Statutes of ſome Colledges have wiſely provided, that when there is any competition for places of preferment, *cæteris paribus*, they that have moſt need of it, ſhould be firſt choſen, they that have leaſt wealth ſhould carry it, if they have as much worth. May Patrons go by the ſame Rule, *viz.* To prefer the pooreſt firſt, which to do is as I may call it Simony inverſed, or the juſt oppoſite to baſe Simony: for where Simony takes place, they that have moſt (and are moſt free to part with it) do always carry it; but where Charity bears ſway, the lot falls upon thoſe that have leaſt. I ſee how you may exerciſe a threefold Charity in one, *viz.* Charity to unimployed and impoveriſhed Miniſters, Charity to the places where and people amongſt whom you live, (For ſome Miniſters do not more want good places, then many places do want good Miniſters): Yea, & Charity to

your

your selves and families, to whom honest and able Ministers would be no small blessings: Let me therefore beg for such Ministers, as the *Italians* use to beg for themselves, by saying to our Honourable Nobility, and Gentry, as they to those of whom they ask, *Pray remember to be good to your selves.*

MEDITATION XXXIV.

Upon the killing of several People by the falling of some part of ruinous Churches.

MEn were never afraid, till of late, to pass by the out-sides of Churches, though there were not a few that did not much care to come within them: Alas, that those places, in which many Souls have formerly been saved, by the faithful Preaching of Gods VVord, should now serve to no other end, but to destroy mens Bodies. Seeing the greatest part of so many Churches were burnt, How happy had it been for divers persons if *not one stone had been left upon another, which had not been thrown down*: Those tall Ruins, those high Trophies of the Fire, have cost many lives already; and God only knows, how many more they may cost first and last.

I was never the man that did, (as too many others,) wish the Churches down to the very ground, till since the Fire; and, now I wish it with all my heart, concerning as many of them as are burnt; for, VVhy should they stand to ruin some, and to terrifie all that pass by them, especially in a VVindy-season. I know not to whom it belongs to take care, that ruinated-Buildings, should be quite pulled

pulled down; but, ſure I am, they have had fair warning; and if they take it not, by the ſame reaſon, *That he who digged a pit, and covered it not, in caſe a beaſt fell into it, was to make ſatisfaction to the owner: And, that he, whoſe Oxe gored another mans Oxe to death, knowing that the Oxe had wont to puſh in time paſt, and the owner had not kept him in, was, by* Moſes *his Law, to pay Oxe for Oxe, and the dead was to be his own*, Exod. 21. 36. I ſay, by parity of reaſon, ought they, who know the danger of Fragments of Churches, and other Buildings, ſtanding as they do, to ſatisfie for the lives of thoſe Men and Women, who ſhall happen hereafter to be killed by the fall of thoſe places, which it was their duty to have taken down: Great pity it is that ſo much notice was not taken of the firſt perſon that periſhed by that means, as might have prevented the deſtruction of all the reſt; But, of that we ſpeak too late.

Had thoſe Churches been either perfectly ſtanding, or perfectly demoliſh'd, they could have done no hurt; but, being between both, they were in a capacity to do miſchief; though, as for matter of ſervice, they were in no capacity at all. I am deceived if it be not juſt ſo with almoſt, but not altogether-ruin'd Perſons, as with Places of that ſort; Though they can do, or receive little good themſelves, yet may they prove incomparably deſtructive to others, (eſpecially in ſuch high-Winds as may blow;) and therefore prudence may ſuggeſt, that ſuch Perſons, as are not judged worthy to be perfectly ruin'd, and, as it were deſtroyed from off the face of the earth, had better be left ſtanding in ſome tolerable condition, than in ſuch a tottering and ruinous way, as, in caſe any violent tempeſt, or

unexpected

unexpected Herricane ſhould happen, might indanger the ruin of many, upon whom they may chance to fall.

I cannot diſmiſs this Subject till I have conſidered how ſecurely thoſe Perſons, that were killed by the fall of ruinous-Buildings, may have been ſuppoſed to have paſſed by them, till perchance their utter-deſtruction gave them the firſt apprehenſions of their dangers, or rather anticipated the apprehenſions of it. Alas! How unexpected a gueſt oft-times is Death? How often doth it draw the latch and come in upon men unawares, when they dream of nothing leſs? How comes it like a *thief in the night*, when men are in a profound ſleep of ſecurity? It is like, thoſe People thought, that ſeeing ſo many perſons had gon that way with ſafety the ſelf-ſame-day; yea, it may be the ſelf-ſame-hour; ſo might they, as well as the reſt: But, I ſee, there is no Topick, from which men argue for ſecurity, (how probable ſoever,) but fails them now and then; neither is there any ſafety in probable immunity, from ſudden death, but only in due preparation for it. As for thoſe, who have often paſſed to and fro the Ruins, and by the ſides of tottering-Walls, but never received any hurt: I wiſh they may conſider, How infinitely they are bound to God for the gracious watchfulneſs of his good Providence over them, and for putting ſo vaſt a difference betwixt them and others, as not to let them loſe one hair of their heads by ruinated-Buildings, whereby others have loſt their lives: And, may ſuch, as have occaſion to paſs-by ſuch places from day to day, duly conſider, That God hath created more dangers than were formerly; and therefore ought they to walk with more circumſpection

cumſpection than they had wont to do, and to be *in the fear of the Lord* all the day long; and to be in readineſs for the worſt that can befall them; as men that carry their lives in their hands, and do walk in the midſt of menacing-perils. There is a Promiſe, (if I may ſo call it,) *Job.* 5. 23. that it were good for a man to have intereſt in, eſpecially at ſuch a time as this; *Thou ſhalt be in league with the ſtones*, as well as *the beaſts of the field ſhall be at peace with thee.*

MEDITATION XXXV.

Of the Fire, its not exceeding the Liberties of the City.

WHen I conſider the Compaſs this fire took, how far it went, and where it ſtopt, I ſee cauſe to wonder at ſeveral things; *Firſt*, That it did burn much-what about the Proportion of the whole City, within the Walls; that is to ſay, look how much was left ſtanding within the Walls, (as if it had been by way of exchange and compenſation,) ſo much, or thereabouts it burnt without. *Secondly*, That though it threw down the Gates, and got without the Walls, yet it no where went beyond the Liberties of the City of *London*; as if the Bars had been a greater fence againſt it, (which indeed were no fence at all) than the Gates and Walls could be. Had the Cittizens gone in Proceſſion, or had the Lord Mayor and his Brethren took a Survey of the Bounds and Limits of their Juriſdiction, they could not have kept much more within compaſs than the Fire did. Did not he who ſets bounds to the Sea, and ſaith to the proud Waves

waves thereof, hitherto shalt thou go and no further; I say, did not he say the same thing to those proud flames? How admirable is the work of God, in causing Creatures that are without Reason, yea, without Life, to act, as if they well understood what they did? Doth he not cause *the day-spring to know its place*, *Job* 38. 12. and *the Sun to know its going down*, *Psalm* 104. 19. *The Storck in the heavens, knoweth her appointed time, and the Turtle, and the Crane, and the Swallow, observe the time of their comming*, *Jer.* 8. 7. When I consider, how the fire took just such a proportion, as if it had been markt out, it brings to mind that usual saying, That God doth all things in weight and measure, and makes me think of such passages of Scripture, as where God saith, *Isaiah* 28. 16. that *He would lay Judgment to the Line, and Righteousness to the Plummet*. Also, where God speaks of *a people mated out* (viz. for destruction, *Isa.* 18. 2. and 7.) *and trodden under foot*. Also, where it is said of God, that *He weighed out a path to his anger*, *Psalm* 78. 50. Which we translate, that *He made a way to his anger*, the meaning is, He did proportion it, as if he had dispensed it by weight.

How great a Mercy was it, that the Suburbs were spared, considering, how great, how populous, and how poor they were? Being so great and capacious, they can contain all the exiles of the City; but, it had been impossible for the City, if it had stood, and they had been burnt, to have contained all the out-casts of the more spacious Suburbs. Considering their populousness, if the fire had fallen to their lot, possibly, five times so many persons as now are, had been undone,

undone; and so many families had been reduced to utmost penury, as all *England* had scarce been sufficient to relieve. Lastly, considering, their Poverty they had much more generally been unable to bear their losses than Citizens, or those within the Walls were. Neither was the sparing of the Suburbs, a thing more desirable, than it was improbable, when the fire was in its Meridian or Zenith, if I may so call it. For, as the Sun, which sets out in the East, finisheth not its race, till it come about to the West; so did this dreadfull Fire threaten not to stop, till it had run thorough the Suburbs as well as the City it self. But God, *who causeth it to rain upon one City, and not upon another*, and, who kept that Storm of fire from falling upon *Zoar*, which destroyed *Sodom* and three other Cities, of that which was called *Pentapolis*, He thus divided the flames of fire, that most parts of the City should have their share, but the Suburbs, though in great danger, should have none. I think, if men had designed, to have burnt so far, and no further, as easy as it was to kindle, it was hard to extinguish such a fire, when, and where they would: But if any malicious persons, did conduct it so far, and there leave it, *What they have done secretly, will one day be proclaimed upon the Housetop.*

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MEDITATION XXXVI.

Upon the Suburbs coming into more requeſt then ever, ſince the fire.

HOw much more conſiderable are the Suburbs now, than they lately were? Some places of deſpicable termination, and as mean account, but a few moneths ſince, ſuch as *Hounds-ditch*, and *Shordich*, do now contain not a few Citizens of very good faſhion. Philoſophers ſay, that *Corruptio unius eſt generatio alterius*: ſo was the marring of the City, the making of the Suburbs. What rich commodities cannot the Suburbs now ſupply us with, which heretofore could be had onely within the walls. Time was that rich Citizens would almoſt have held their Noſes, if they had paſt by thoſe places where now it may be they are conſtrained to dwell: they would hardly have kept *the Aegyptian Elixir, ſtock* (to uſe *Jobs* words with ſome variation) where now they are forced to keep themſelves. Had *London* been ſtanding; in the places where ſome of them do now inhabit, *Zijim* and *Ochim* might have dwelt for them, *and the Satyrs might have danced there* (to allude to Iſa. 13. 21.) In how great requeſt at this day, is poor *Pidmoor* as I may call it (*Southwark* I mean) which lay ſubmiſſively at the feet of *London*, like an humble valley at the foot of a high mountain? What multitudes of Citizens have flockt to it, as glad to be free amongſt thoſe that were not free themſelves, the fire having as it were broken down the partition-wall, betwixt thoſe that were Free-men of *London*, and thoſe that were not.

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If the Suburbs had been burnt, VVhither would the Inhabitants have fled? Trade within the VValls they might not, as Citizens may without; which liberty they having now taken, (as it is their due,) What are the Suburbs now becom, but as it were the in-side of the late-Famous City, carried and placed without the Walls? *London* its self (by a kind of Μετωνυμία) the Soul of the City, being now translated into the Body of the Suburbs. So that he, who would now look for *London*, must look for most of it, not within, but without the Walls. How easie is it with God to pull down one and set up another? *To pluck the mighty from their seat, and to exalt the poor and needy?* VVe read, though in another sense, that every *Valley shall be exalted, and every Mountain and Hill shall be made low.* VVho can but think of *Hannah*'s words, shewing, how God turns the VVorld up-side-down like a VVheel, the uppermost Spoke whereof is quickly down, and the lowest at the top, 1 Sam. 2. 5. *They that were full have hired out themselves for bread, and they that were hungry have ceased: So that the barren have born seven, and she that hath many children is waxen feeble.* And Vers. 7. *The Lord makes poor, and maketh rich; he bringeth low, and lifteth up.* It is good counsel that an excellent man gives, *viz.* That we should despise no mans present condition, seeing we do not know his Destiny. It should seem, the poor despised Suburbs were destin'd to hold up their heads more than ever, when the noble City should lie in dust and ashes, as now it doth. Let *Lutoners* not think much of it, that the Providence of God hath cast them without the Gates and VValls of *London*; but, rather consider of such expressions as those, *Heb.* 13. 12, 13, 14.

How that Christ suffered without the Gate; Let us go therefore to him without the Camp, bearing his reproach, For here we have no continuing City. I say, Let them think of those words, and prepare for another-guise suffering *without the Gate*, than as now they do; and bearing another-guise-*reproach* than now they bear, for this is next to none; it being more proper to say, and think, That they have made the Suburbs honourable; than, That the Suburbs have made them despicable.

MEDITATION XXXVII.

Upon the Tongue being a Fire, &c. James 3. 6.

WHen the Scripture would express how mischievous a Member an evil Tongue is, it saith, *It is a Fire.* Fire hath done a world of mischief one time or other, and so have evil Tongues; whereupon it is added, *That the Tongue is a world of iniquity.* There is a fire that is called *Ignis fatuus* (*quid efficit tales?*) because it makes fools of men, leading them out of their way: So *Solomon*, speaking concerning a young man seduced by a Harlot, saith, *With her much fair speech she caused him to yield*, Prov. 7. 21. Fire from small beginnings spreads it self very far, so do the evils of mens Tongues. So, *Solomon* speaking of a Fool, saith, *The beginning of the words of his mouth is foolishness, and the end of his talk is mischievous madness*, Eccles. 10. 13. They are high expressions which St. *James* useth concerning the Tongue, telling us, that *it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature, and it is set on fire of Hell.*

By

By *ſetting on fire the courſe of nature*, we may underſtand thoſe great Combuſtions which the tongues of men have made in the VVorld, of which there are three famous Inſtances that come to mind, ſufficient to demonſtrate that, ſo as men may uſe and imploy their Tongues, by means thereof the whole VVorld may be put into a flame. How did the Princes of *Succoth* fire *Gideon*, by that upbraiding Queſtion mentioned Judg. 8.5. *Are the hands of Zeba and Zalmunnah now in thy hands, that we ſhould give bread unto thine Army?* To which he replyed, *VVhen the Lord ſhall give Zeba and Zalmunnah into mine hands, then will I tear your fleſh with the briars of the wilderneſs, and with thorns*: And we know he was as good as his word. Did not *Nabals* churliſh Tongue kindle ſuch a fire in *Davids* breaſt, as might have conſumed all his family, if the greater prudence of *Abigail* his wife had not ſeaſonably extinguiſht it, 1 *Sam.* 25. 10. It was gone ſo far, that *David* had ſworn, *He would not leave of them that did pertain to Nabal by the morning-light any that piſſed againſt a wall*, Verſ. 22. And all this becauſe of a provoking Anſwer he ſent him, ſaying, *VVho is David? Many ſervants nowadayes break away from their Maſters*, &c. Yea, the Tongue of *David* himſelf, (at what time he came with a lie in his mouth to *Abimelech*) proved no otherwiſe than a fire, which did conſume at once four-ſcore and five of the Lords Prieſts, 1 *Sam.* 22. 19. By the ſame reaſon, that ſo great Combuſtions were raiſed by a few ſparks falling from the Tongues of particular men, may the whole VVorld be deſtroyed by the fire of mens Tongues, ſuch, and ſo great as it may be, which may give us an accompt, of what the Text ſaith concerning the Tongue, its *ſetting on fire the whole*

course of nature; Now, whereas he adds that the *Tongue it's self, is set on fire of hell*, me-thinks he speaks of a wicked Tongue, as if it were a sacrifice, a Holocaust to the Devil (as the Apostle saith in another case; *The things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to Devils, and not to God*, 1 Cor. 10. 20.) For whereas the sacrifices which God did accept were kindled by fire from heaven, a depraved Tongue, is said to be kindled by a fire, worse then that which is common, *viz.* by fire from hell, as if it were in token of the Devils preparing, and challenging of it for himself.

Yet as *ill* a construction as calling the tongue a fire, may bear in one sense; yet in another acceptation of that Metaphor, the Tongue ought to be a Fire, and it is its excellency so to be. The holy Ghost came down upon the Apostles, in the *form of fiery cloven tongues*, Act. 2. 3. God did touch *the mouth of his prophet with a coal from his altar*, in token that *his iniquity was taken away, and his sin purged*, Isa. 6. 7. There are words that may be used to enemies which would be like *heaping coals of fire upon their heads*, in that good sense that *Solomon* wisheth us so to do. May my tongue be such a fire as one of these, may it be a flame breaking forth, to vent, and express a fire of God that burns within: may it be a fire consuming the vices of others by faithful admonitions, and reproofs, in kindling and increasing zeal in others, by warm and affectionate counsels; a fire refreshing the hearts of others by a due and seasonable application of divine and comfortable considerations. They whose tongues are a fire in the worse sense, *viz.* inflaming the world with contention, concupiscence, and other noisome lusts, shall have for their reward *sharp arrows of the Almighty*

Almighty with coals of Juniper, Psal. 120.4. Yea, the time is coming, when, in case they repent not, they shall cry out with *Dives*, *Father Abraham, send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue, tormented in this flame*, Luk. 16. As fire is one of usefullest things in the world, when well imployed; so is the Tongue of man; (therefore called his glory): but as that, when it exceeds it's bounds, is greatly pernicious, so are the Tongues of men; and therefore, look what care is taken to keep fire within our Chymnies, and other places proper for it, the like should be taken to set a watch before the door of our lips, that we offend not with our Tongues: no wonder S. *James* should say, that *He who offendeth not in words, is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body*. For, he that can master his tongue can master fire, which of all creatures is most untameable.

MEDITATION XXXVIII.

Upon the Angels being called flames of fire, Heb. 1.

IS it for their Agility, or for their spirituality, or for their great power, or for their likeness to God that Angels are called flames of fire? or rather, is it not for all of these? How quickly doth a flash of lightnings shoot its self from East to West? Nor are the Angels of God less nimble. Light and fire (and flames comprehend both) are as spiritual bodies as any we know, the fitter therefore to resemble those who are meer Spirits, and as the Text calls them *ministring Spirits*. The power of fire, and particularly in destroying, we know to our cost. And did that single Angel show himself less powerful, *who in*

one night destroyed a hundred fourscore & five thousand men belonging to the host of Senacherib, Isa. 37. 36. It is not for nothing, that *Angels are called Principalities and Powers*. Neither have good Angels less power to save, than to destroy, when they are appointed thereunto. God himself being called a fire, it is probable enough, that Angels go by the same name, because of the resemblance which they bear to God, who have more of Gods image than man himself though man hath more of it then all other creatures. The Chariots of fire which *Elisha* saw, 2 *King.* 6. 17. What were they, but so many Angels of God that were sent to guard him which made him say, there were more with than against him. Yea, the fiery chariot in which *Elijah* was said to have been taken up to heaven, possibly was no other then a convoy of Angels, such as carried *Lazarus* into *Abrahams* bosom. How happy are the Servants of God in having a guard of Angels? How safe are they, being compassed about with such walls of fire? No wonder, that the *righteous are more bold than a Lion*, as *Solomon* speaks; wild beasts are afraid of fire, and if there be a sort of men as savage as they, yet can those good Angels which God hath ordered to protect his people, keep those Salvages in awe. What a comfort is it that God hath such nimble Messengers to dispatch upon any expedition for our good? An host of Angels can be with us presently, even as soon as lightning can glance thorough the air. It is well for believers that Angels are so powerful that they excell in strength, seeing they are theirs, appointed to minister for their good. In how much less danger are Gods children many times, than they apprehend themselves, because their guard is spiritual and invisible; which made *Elisha's* servant

more

more afraid one while than otherwise he would have been, & than afterwards he was. If every Angel be a flame of fire, what the Prophet told his man in another case, may be applied in this, *There are more* (*flames and fires* I mean) *with Gods people than are against them.*

MEDITATION XXXIX.

Upon the word of God it's being compared to fire, Jer. 23. 29.

HOw shall we understand that question, *Jer.* 23. 29. *Is not my word like as a fire saith the Lord?* Wherein consists the resemblance betwixt the word of God and fire? Surely it's warming the hearts of men in whom it takes place, is one reason of it's being so called: For so said the Disciples of Christ *Did not our hearts burn within us, whilst he opened the Scriptures to us?* Luk. 24. 32. Or else it may be so called from it's efficacy; in which sense it is also called a Hammer *which breaketh the rocks in pieces:* Fire is able to demolish the strongest places, of wch we many have sad instances at this day; & so the Word is said to be mighty through God to pull down strong holds. We read of Gold tried by fire, 1 *Pet.* 1. 7. and is not the Word of God a trying thing? It is said (I shall not here examine in what sense) that *God sent forth his word and tried* Joseph. *Psal.* 10. 19. Who knows not the purifying nature of fire, whereby metals are refined? and did not Christ ascribe the like virtue to his Word, saying, *Now are ye clean through the word that I have spoken to you?* What more piercing then fire, and in that respect also, it is much an Embleme of the Word of

God, which is said to be *sharper than a two-edged sword piercing to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow*, Heb. 4. 12.

These are but some of the Parallels that might be made, betwixt the word of God and Fire. He, whose word it is, would have it to be as Fire. And if it be Fire, where it hath once broken out, and got head, it will be hard to smother or suppresse it (as that Evangelical Fire, which was kindled by *Luther* in *Germany*, could never be extinguished to this day). Saint *Paul* saith, though he *suffered bonds, yet the word of God was not bound*, 2 *Tim.* 2. 4. And in *Phil.* 1. 12. he saith, that the troubles *which befell him, had happened rather to the furtherance of the Gospel; and many did wax confident by his bonds, to speak the word without fear.* If the word of God be Fire (as it is), I wonder not that there are such combustions in the world by means of it; as Christ, telling us what (through the corruption of men) would insue upon his Gospel, saith, *He came not to send peace upon earth, but a sword*, *Mat.* 10. 34. It is not Gods word, but something else those men would have, who would have nothing preached to them, that should be as fire to consume their Lusts, or to make their consciences smart at the remembrance of them. That which is not apt to search and pierce, is nothing akin to fire, and therefore cannot be the word of God, which is said to be *quick and powerful* as fire its self. The fires which God kindleth for the good of the world (whereof his word is one of the chief) woe be to any that shall go about to quench. Quenching of prophecying is next unto quenching of the Spirit, yea, and is one way of doing it, as Divines observe.

I see cause, to blesse the God of heaven, who hath created some fires as profitable as others are mischievous, namely, his word for one, a fire that never doth hurt, otherwise than by accident (neither indeed would other fires, kept within their due bounds) but so much good, as no tongue can express. O Lord, that through thine infinite goodness, I might experiment in my self and others, all those excellent properties of fire meeting in thy word, of which I have now been speaking; that my heart and theirs might burn within us at the hearing of it, as did the hearts of thy Disciples, that it may be mighty through thee to pull down all the strong-holds of Sin and Sathan that are within us, that it might trye us as gold is tryed in the fire, and at the same time refined and purified; that it might pierce, unto the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow; that the sin, which is, as it were, bred in our bones, may be gotten out of the very flesh. May the fire of thy word, have such influence as this upon us, we shall then be sure to escape the fire of thy wrath, and to arrive to that happiness, which is called, *The inheritance of the Saints in Light*, *Col.* 1. 12.

MEDITATION XL.

Upon the spoiling of Conduits and other Aqueducts, by this Fire.

ME-thinks the several Conduits that were in *London*, stood like so many little (but strong) Forts, to confront and give check, to that great enemy, Fire, if any occasion should be. There, me-thinks

me-thinks the water was, as it were, intrenched and ingarriſoned. The ſeveral Pipes and Vehicles of water, that were within thoſe Conduits, all of them charged with water, till, by the turning of the Cocks, they were diſcharged again; were, as ſo many Souldiers within thoſe Forts, with their Muſquets charged, and ready to be diſcharged upon the drawing of their ſeveral Cocks, to keep and defend thoſe places. And look how Enemies are wont to deal with thoſe Caſtles, which they take to be impregnable, and diſpair of ever getting by ſtorm, *viz.* to attempt the ſtarving of them by a cloſe Siege, intercepting all proviſion of Victuals from coming at them; ſo went the fire to work with thoſe little Caſtles of ſtone, which were not eaſie for it to burn down (witneſs their ſtanding to this day); ſpoiled them or almoſt ſpoiled them it hath for preſent, by cutting off thoſe ſupplies of water, which had wont to flow to them, melting thoſe leaden Channels, in which the water had wont to be conveyed to them, and thereby, as it were, ſtarving thoſe Garriſons, which they could not take by ſtorm.

What the Scripture ſpeaks of the Land of *Jordan*, that *it was well watered every where*, before the Lord deſtroyed *Sodom*, *even as the Garden of the Lord*, like the Land of *Egypt* (made fruitful by the River *Nilus*); the ſame might have been ſaid of *London* before this fire; It was watered like *Paradiſe* its ſelf: yea, whereas *Paradiſe* had but one River, (though *it parted into four heads*, *Gen.* 2. 10.) *London* had two at leaſt, deviding its ſelf, or rather devided into many branches, and diſperſing its ſelf ſeveral wayes. For, beſides the noble River of *Thames*, gliding not only by the ſides, but thorow

row the bowels of *London*, there was another, called the *New-River*, brought from *Hartfordſhire* thither, by the induſtry and ingenuity of that worthy and never to be forgotten Knight, Sir *Hugh Middleton*, the ſpring of whoſe deſerved fame is ſuch, as the late Fire its ſelf (though the dreadfulleſt of all that we have known) hath not, nor will not be able to dry up; but continue it will, a Fountain of praiſe and honour, bubling up to all poſterity.

As nature, by Veins and Arteries, ſome great, ſome ſmall, placed up and down all parts of the Body, miniſtreth blood and nouriſhment to every member thereof, and part of each member; ſo was that wholſome Water, which was as neceſſary for the good of *London*, as blood is for the life and health of the body, conveyed by Pipes, wooden or metalline, as by ſo many veins into all parts of that famous City. If water were, as we may call it, the blood of *London*, then were its ſeveral Conduits, as it were, the Liver and Spleen of that City (which are reckoned as the Fountains of blood in humane bodies) for that the great Trunks of veins conveying blood about the body, are ſeated there, as great Roots fixed in the Earth, ſhooting out their branches divers and ſundry wayes. But alas! how were thoſe Livers inflamed, and how unfit have they been ſince to do their wonted Office? What pity it is, to ſee thoſe breaſts of *London* (for ſo I may alſo call them) almoſt dryed up: and the poor Citizens mean time ſo loth as they are, to be weaned from their former place. They were lovely ſtreams indeed, which did refreſh that noble City, one of which was alwayes at work, pouring out its ſelf when the reſt lay ſtill.

As if the Fire had been angry with the poor old

old Tankard-bearers, both Men and Women, for propagating that Element which was contrary to it; and carrying it upon their shoulders as it were in State and Triumph; it hath even destroyed their Trade, and threatned to make them perish by fire, who had wont to live by water. Seeing there are few or none to suck those Breasts at this day, the matter is not so great; if they be almost empty and dry at present, may they but fill again, and their Milk be renewed, so soon as the honest Citizens shall come again to their former scituations. O Lord, that it might be thy good pleasure to let *London* be first restor'd, and ever after preserved from Fire; and when once restored, let it be as plentifully and commodiously supplied with water as ever it was formerly: Make it once again as the Paradise of God; but never suffer any destroying Serpent any more to come there.

MEDITATION XLI.

Upon the Retorts and Reproaches of Papists, occasioned by this fire.

ME-thinks I hear some *Roman-Catholicks*, (as they are pleased to call themselves,) saying, Some of your Protestants did confidently foretel, That within this present year 1666 *Rome* should down; *Babylon* should fall; Antichrist should be destroyed: But, now your own City is destroyed in the self-same-year; which (according to you) doth show, that *London* was the true-*Babylon*, and that the true Antichrist is amongst your selves. Yet, upon due examination, it will be found, that there is as little strength in the Argument which they have brought,

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as there is sense in the name whereby they are called, *viz. Roman-Catholicks:* which is as much as to say, Members of the particular Universal-Church; or of that part of the Church which is the whole; or of *Rome*, which is all the World. We read of *Names of blasphemy which were upon the heads of the Beast*, Rev. 13. 1. But, as if that were not sufficient they have added a Name, which is perfect non-sense for the reason aforesaid; but, that by the way. Their design is, to prove, that Antichrist is amongst us; and, that *London* was that Mystical-*Babylon* so often spoken of, according to what was lately found in a Seditious Libel; *Do to South-Babel, &c.* meaning to the Southern-part of *London* yet standing, *&c.* But alass! How weak are the Premisses from which they have drawn these conclusions.

Their Argument put into a Syllogism, is this; If *London* were destroyed the self-same-year in which some did Propheste that *Babylon* and *Antichrist* should be destroyed; then is *London* that which the Scripture calls *Babylon* and *Anti-christ* amongst the Protestants: But *London* was, *&c. Ergo.* If the World mistake not, some of you have proved the Minor so strongly, (*viz.* the destruction of *London,*) and in such a year, that no body can disprove it: But, the consequence of the Major-Proposition hath no force at all in it; For, what if some did Propheste the destruction of *Babylon* and *Antichrist* in-66, and *London* only was destroyed that year, from what Principle of Scripture, or Reason, can you thence infer, that *London* is Mystical-*Babylon*? For, first of all, Who were they that did Propheste such a thing? Were they not a few inconsiderable Enthusiastical Men, to whom, not one Protestant of a thousand gave credit? For, believe

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me, Enthusiasts and Protestants are no convertible terms; forasmuch as not every hundredth or thousandth Protestant is any thing of an Enthusiast. We do not use to charge upon your Church the Extravagant Bablings of one or a few particular Papists, but the professed Doctrines and Tenets of that which yourselves call the Church of *Rome*. Do us the same right, and forbear to charge upon Protestants, as such, what the Protestant Church doth disavow.

Possibly they were some of your own Religion, some Romanists, putting on the mask of Protestants (as hath bin usual with them to do, for sinister ends) who foreknowing, that *London* would be burnt this year (as nothing is more easy, than for men to know what themselves intend to do) gave out, that *Babylon* and Anti-christ would be destroyed in sixty six, for that very end, that when they had once effected the burying of *London* in ashes, they might have some pretence to write this Epitaph, *Here lies Babylon*, here lies that which was the seat of the true Anti-christ; thereby rolling away the reproach of *Babylon* and Anti-christ from themselves to whom it belongs, upon the Protestants whom it concerns not.

But take heed how you deny Anti-christ to be amongst you, for by that means you quit one Argument, which some of your writers have used to prove *Rome* to be a true Church, for that it is said, that *Anti-christ sitteth in the Temple of God*, 2 *Thes.* 2. 4. But, if upon further consideration, you would not be known to have Anti-christ amongst you, let me tell you, that the *Beast* spoken of in Scripture, is so thoroughly markt, that it is easy

Sir. Edw. Sand. *Spec. Europ.*

easy to distinguish him from the Protestant Church, and from *Rome* heathenish and whatsoever else he would turn over his name to. Me-thinks that one Text, 2 *Thess.* 2. 4. would plainly enough decipher Anti-christ, if there were none but that, *Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God*, or that is worshipped; so that he, as God, sitteth in the Temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. The Emperours of *Rome*-heathenish sate not in the Temple of God, they were not within the pales of the professedly Christian Church, therefore they were not the man of sin, and Anti-christ there spoken of; but he is to be sought and found amongst those that are called Christians. Now amongst Christians there are none that exalt themselves above all that are called God, that is, above all Magistrates which are called Gods, challenging a Primacy and Supremacy to themselvs over all Christians, both Subjects and Princes; I say there are none that do so, but the Popes of Rome successively: whence it comes to pass that Papists are wont to refuse the Oath of Supremacy to their Native Prince, as believing not their own Prince to be Supream under God over his own Subjects, but the Pope of *Rome* over both him and them. Moreover, who is it that sitteth in the Temple of God, shewing himself to be God, that is, assumeth to himself those things which are proper and particuliar to God onely, as namely, To forgive sins? For none can forgive sins but God onely: I say, who, but the respective Popes of *Rome* do take upon them by their own power, and in their own name to forgive sin? the grosness of which practice did first provoke *Luther*, of a shiff Monk, to become a zealous Protestant. Yea, who amongst those that were called Christians, did ever exalt himself above

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all that is worshipped (by which may be meant the true God), saving the respective Popes of *Rome*? And they have done it time after time in taking upon them to dispense with the Commission of sin, as with the taking of unlawful Oaths, and such like. Now God himself though he remit sin to such as truly believe, and repent; yet he never did, nor, by reason of the holiness of his nature, ever could give men free leave, and licence to do that which is sinful. It is true that God gave the Israelites Commission to borrow the Jewels and Earings of the Egyptians, and never to return them again: but that was not a liberty to steal; for God, Whose all those things were, and whose are all things, was pleased to alienate the propriety, to take those things from the Egyptians, and give them to the Israelites.

A fourth Character of Anti-christ, is, that his Coming is, with lying wonders, *vers.* 9. that is, with feigned miracles. Now who amongst all that are called Christians, trade so much (if at all) in those things, as doth the Church of *Rome*? How do the Romanists (they and only they) abound with miracles; and all fictitious, and no other then gross imposture? Tell those people that have no Bibles to consult, but what are in an unknown language or else perverted by a false translation, or a corrupt gloss: I say, tell them the Anti-christ is amongst the Protestants, and that *London* was the Mystical *Babylon* of which the Scripture speaks, *Sic notus Ulyssi?* Is Anti-christ no better known, think you, to them that have seen his Picture and Description in holy Writ. Alas! such coarse Wares as is the ridiculous asserting of *London* to be *Babylon*, will go off no where, but in a dark shop, or by a false light.

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Your blinded Moles, that live as it were under ground, may be made to believe that *Rome* is the new *Jerusalem* spoken of *Rev.* 21. 1. and *London* what ever you please to call it, or any thing else where-with you shall think fit to delude them by those artifices which you call Pious-Frauds (which is as proper an expression as Pious-Devils): but our people converse with the Sun, I mean the light of Scripture. They have read the book of the *Revelations* of Saint *John*, and though they do not pretend to understand every thing therein contained, yet they doubt not what is meant by *the beast's having seven heads and ten horns*, Rev. 17. 1. because they find Saint *John* himself expounding it, *Rev.* 17. 9. *The seven heads are seven mountains.* And there are seven Kings (that is, Forms of governments) *Five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come*, &c. These passages agree & quadrate to *Rome* exactly. It was built upon seven Hills yet to be seen, though some of them be now without the walls of the City. It had seven forms of Government, whereof five were fallen in Saints *John*'s time, *viz.* Kings, Consuls, Tribunes, Decemvir's, Dictators: one is, saith he, that is, Emperors were then in being, the other was not yet come, *viz.* Popes. But do these expresions, all or any of them, agree to *London*, as they agree to *Rome*? Doth that stand upon just seven hills? Hath that had just seven forms of Government, five whereof were fallen in Saint *John*'s time, and one other in being? With what face then can you affirm *London* to be *Babylon*? But I see, Those men have impudence enough to assert any thing, who have taught their followers to believe every thing they please to assert.

A faith of Legends (and only that) may be sufficient to assure men that *London* was Mystical Babylon; for that I take to be more than a faith of Miracles: the latter being a faith of Posibles, the other of Impossibilities and contradictions. Therefore though some of the sillier sort of Papists may believe, and others may boldly assert the same though they believe it not (as they do in many other cases): yet Protestants can never be perswaded to it whilst the world stands; nor any other persons, that are from under the power of grosse Ignorance, or Prejudice: As for the name Anti-christ, Who knows not that it imports one that sets himself in the stead or place of Christ, as well as against Christ; the Praeposition ἀντὶ, signifying both *pro*, and *con*, that is, as well For, as Against. Now, Who amongst those that are called Protestants, can be charged with setting himself in the place of Christ, as if he would be taken for Christ himself? But that do the Popes of *Rome* successively, whilst they affirm to themselves, those things which are peculiar to Christ alone, as namely Forgivenesse of sin, &c. I had forborn this discourse, but that I have been advertised of the reproaches of some of the Papists, who, after the Baptism of fire we have lately undergone, go about to Baptize us, and our City, with their spittle, by the names of *Babylon* and Anti-christ, due only to *Rome*, and Romanists: and God forbid that whilst Papists do unjustly asperse Protestants (whose Religion is that which the Laws of *England* doth establish) Protestants should not have leave, and take heart enough to vindicate themselves. In a word, if *London* be Mystical *Babylon* (so confident am I it is not), let it never rise again; if *Rome* be not, let it

never

never fall: and, on the other hand, let *Rome* so fall as it proves to be *Babylon the great, the Mother of Harlots, and Abominations of the Earth*; Rev. 17. 5: and let *London* so rise and flourish again (and only so) as it shall be found to be otherwise.

MEDITATION XLII.

Upon the Pains which the King's Majesty *is said to have taken in helping to extinguish the Fire.*

I Was no eye-witness, but have been informed, that when the Fire came near to *Cripplegate*, His Majesty being then and there present, did, in His own Person, take great Pains (no less, as was told, then if He had been a poor Labourer,) to promote the extinction of it. Possibly some weak and inconsiderate persons, that saw His Majesty at that time stooping so low, might in their hearts despise Him for it, (as *Michal* did *David*, for leaping and dancing before the Ark, 2 *Sam.* 6. 16. and 20.) saying in derision, *How glorious was the King of* England *to day?* as she, *How glorious was the King if* Israel? &c. But wise and religious persons, that had seen *David* in that posture, would have spoken the same words in good earnest, which she spake in scorn, meaning, as they said, *How glorious indeed was the King of* Israel, whilst, transported with holy zeal, he leapt before the Ark, which is called, *Dancing before the Lord*? The like can I say from mine heart of our Dread Soveraign: *How glorious was He* in truth, and in reality, when He took upon Him the form, or rather the work of a mean-man; and vouchsafed His helping-Hand to stop that dismal Fire, when it was in its full carreer? Had I seen

Him with His Crown upon His Head, His Scepter in His Hand, His Noble Senators all waiting upon Him in their Parliament-Robes, or in all the State in which He could have been ſeen, (*Cant.* 3. 11.) either on the day of His Coronation, or of His Eſpouſals; I could not have reverenced Him more than I ſhould have done, if I had beheld Him with a Bucket in His Hand, pouring water upon the Flames; or than I do, ſo often as I think of Him in ſome ſuch poſture of moſt kind and obliging condeſcenſion. Me-thinks it was but equal that Chriſt ſhould be more loved, but not leſs honoured, when he humbled himſelf ſo far, as to take a *Towel*, and therewith *to waſh, and to wipe his Diſciples feet*, John 13. 4.

Kings never act more like themſelves than when they are doing good to their Subjects, and are ſnatching them, or their Concerns, as fire-brands out of the Fire: forasmuch as the Scripture ſaith, *That Magiſtrates are the Miniſters of God to thoſe that are under them for good*, Rom. 13. 4. The *Roman* Emperors had wont to iſſue out their Commands to their Soldiers, not in the third, but in the firſt Perſon; So *Pertinax* his Word and Motto was *Militemus*; not, *March ye*; but, *Let us March on*; (including himſelf.) So *Septimius Severus* his word was *Laboremus*, *Let us be doing*. In like manner, our Gracious Soveraign is ſaid to have ſtretcht forth His own Royal Hands to aſſiſt the putting out of thoſe Aſpiring Flames, which ſeemed to expect a Princely Extinguiſher: That was ſuch a kind of Royal Aid, as all Subjects muſt needs be in love with; and, Why not more free to that other, which goes by ſuch a name in the remembrance of this? One of the Ancients did wiſh, to have ſeen

Chriſt

Chriſt in the Fleſh, *Paul* in the Pulpit, and *Rome* in its ancient Glory. Much rather, at leſt-wiſe than the laſt of theſe, would I have ſeen that ſight I am now ſpeaking of, *viz.* His moſt Excellent Majeſty beſtirring Himſelf, to give check to thoſe Flames which threatned to lay both His great City and Suburbs all in aſhes. Who had the faces to ſtand ſtill and look on, (as many did at other times,) whilſt their Soveraign Himſelf was ſo imployed? Whilſt Princes work, Subjects cannot have the confidence to be idle. Oh the power and efficacy of Princely Examples! *Regis ad exemplum*, &c. When Princes will help to extinguiſh fires themſelves, the work is like to ſucceed; and when that is done, the greateſt thanks are due to them, next unto the King of Kings.

I wiſh, there were not many other fires at this day within the Bowels of this Nation, *viz.* of fears and jealouſies, envy and emulation, wrath and revenge, diſſatisfaction and diſcontent, diſſenſion and diviſion: May he, who is the *Wonderful*, *Counſellor*, and *God only wiſe*, inſtruct His Majeſty, how, and which way to extinguiſh them: and mean-time to increaſe one other fire (and only that) *viz.* of love and affection; firſt to God, nextly to Himſelf, and then amongſt all his Subjects one towards another. *Solomon* tells of *a poor man, who by his wiſdom ſaved a little City, when a great king came againſt it, and beſieged it*, Eccleſ. 9. 14. By this means may His Majeſty ſave, and preſerve, not only one City but three Kingdoms, which thoſe fires threaten to deſtroy: (for our Saviour tells us, *That a kingdom divided againſt it ſelf cannot ſtand*:) And though *no man remembred that poor man* (becauſe he was poor) yet when a more glorious action ſhall be done by a

Princely hand, ſurely no man will or can forget it. Will it not be a conſiderable acceſſion of honour even to a great King, to be inrolled amongſt the Peace-makers, whom *Chriſt* pronounceth *bleſſed*? As for His Majeſties inclination to all ſuch Atchievements, as ſweetneſs of temper may induce men to, let all His Subjects be well perſwaded of, by the tears he ſhed, when he beheld the Flames of *London*, which I had not reported but from a very credible Author. How amiable a ſight is it to behold Kings weeping over the miſeries of their Subjects, and what aſſurance doth it give, that they will not be backward to redreſs them ſo far as is within their power? Had His *head been a fountain of tears*, (as the Prophet *Jeremy* upon occaſion wiſht his own,) I doubt not but he had poured it forth when he came near to *Cripplegate*, with reſolution to do all a King could do to put out thoſe flames: May we alwayes ſee a bleſſed contention betwixt our King and his People, Which ſhall moſt reſent and bewail each others ſufferings; Which ſhall moſt promote and rejoyce in each others happineſs!

MEDITATION XLIII.

Of meer Worldlings, who loſt their All by this Fire.

THis it is for men to venture all they have and hope-for, in one bottom; and that unſound and apt to leak: Some lay up no treaſures for themſelves any where but upon earth; and upon earth there is no ſafe place to lay up treaſures in: but ſome are more hazardous than others, (as namely, Houſes, ſubject to the common caſualty of fire;) and yet, ſome, who have contented themſelves with

a portion in this World only, have laid up all there. So just is it with God to let them be foolish, even in relation to Time, that would not be wise for Eternity: weak, even as to this World, that would not be wise for the next. The Prodigal, that desired to make sure of his Patrimony, by having all in hand, presently spent it, and was reduced to husks: When he saw his error, surely he became sensible, that less in possession, and more in reversion would have done better. Were there not some, who, when they would bless themselves, (under a pretence of blessing God,) had nothing else to say, neither cared for any thing else, but this, *Blessed be God! for I am rich*: But, in how small a time are they become poor as *Job*! (as our Proverb is.)

Had they not fair Warning? Did not the Scripture charge them *Not to trust in uncertain riches?* Did it not tell them, *That Riches had wings, and would fly away?* Alas! What will such People do? Whither will they turn themselves? Interest in Heaven they never had any; and, interest on Earth they have none left: They are in such like case as *Saul* was, when he said, *The Philistims were come up against him, and God was departed*: Heaven and earth frowns upon them both at once. Had you been in that case, that *Christ* would have had the Young man in the *Gospel* to have put himself into, when he counselled him, *To sell all that he had, and give it to the poor*; telling him, that if he would do so, *He should have treasures in Heaven*; you had not been the hundredth part so miserable; Yea, happy had you been, as to the main. But now, all sorts of men conclude you in a wofull case; Good men do so, because you neither had nor have any thing but this Worlds goods: Bad men, yea the worst of

men, becauſe you have now loſt what you had. But, miſtake me not, as if I were urging People in that caſe to deſpair. God forbid; I am ſo far from that, that I queſtion not but even they may be happier than ever they were heretofore, if the fault be not their own: for, whereas before they had intereſt in the World, but none in God; hereafter, may they have intereſt in God, which is far better, though perchance they may have little or none in the World. *Chriſt* told the Church of *Laodicea* in a ſpiritual ſenſe, *That ſhe was miſerable, and poor, and naked*; ſo are theſe men in both ſenſes, *viz.* Spiritual and Temporal: but, let them take that Counſel which *Chriſt* there gives, and all will be well, *viz. Buy of Chriſt gold tried in the fire, raiment*, &c. All your loſſes may be reckoned *as droſs and dung in compariſon of* your gains, if you ſhall gain this by your loſſes, *viz.* To win *Chriſt*, and to be found in him. Say now, whether you your ſelves were not the fools, and they whom you counted fools the truly wiſe, whoſe care it was to lay up for themſelves *Treaſures in heaven, where moth eates not, ruſt corrupts not, thieves ſteal not*; and, let me add, where fire cannot break in and conſume.

MEDITATION XLIV.

Upon that Forbearance which it becometh Citizens to uſe one towards another ſince the Fire.

NOw the Fire hath arreſted ſo many honeſt Citizens, and made ſuch woful diſtreſs upon them, what pity is it, that over-haſty Creditors ſhould clap in their Actions upon them thick and threefold; as if ſeeing them ſtoop, they were reſolved

ſolved to break them; or, thinking them fallen for the preſent, they would never ſuffer them to riſe more. If you think them well able to pay you preſently, and know yourſelves unable to be without your moneys any longer, that is another matter; or if you have reaſon to think they will not be honeſt, unleſs you make them ſo by a ſurpriſe, and take them at an advantage, ſuch things may plead for you: but ſuch as have to do with men that are not able to pay their debts when they will, but willing to pay them when they are able, and who in caſe they were forborn a while, might be as well able as willing to ſatisfie every man; I ſay, where that is the caſe, to break mens backs with over-haſtineſs at ſuch a time as this, to give them no reſpite, that they may recover their wind after the late calamity hath run them out of breath, is unchriſtian and more than heatheniſh unmercifulneſs. Will you needleſly add affliction to the afflicted? Will you come like waves one in the neck of another upon thoſe that are almoſt ſunk already? thoſe that daſht upon *Scylla* but a little before, will you throw them upon *Charybdis*? whereas, if they had opportunity to make their Voyage, and might come ſafe to harbour, ſuch might be their ſucceſs, that you would be no loſers by them. Men can part with ſeveral Pints of blood ſucceſſively and by degrees, whereas, if you ſhould take ſo much from them all at once, they would be ready to faint and dye away. If the fire hath really undone men, do not you undo them yet more; If that have taken away all their Eſtates, do not you ſeize their Bodies; as if it were not miſery enough for men to have nothing to live upon, unleſs they alſo lie and languiſh in a Priſon. Do no hurt to others whereby you can do

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no good to yourſelves. Go not to work as if you would conſtrain them to be honeſt, that you believe will be honeſt without conſtraint (otherwiſe called reſtraint in this caſe). As for thoſe debtors of yours that make conſcience to do as they would be done by, (and I ſhall plead for none but ſuch), though at preſent they cannot, *Have* but *patience with them and they will pay you all*: that is, all they owe; at leaſtwiſe, all they can, or ſhall be able to pay, and that is all that you can reaſonably demand or expect.

MEDITATION XLV.

Upon any that are ſaid or ſuppoſed to have rejoyced at the coming and conſequences of this Fire.

WHo are they that did or do rejoyce at the burning of *London*? Some ſuch Monſters there are ſaid to be, and none more likely to be in that number, than they that have given it the name of *Babel* or *Babylon*, from whom we can expect no other than acclamations of Joy, ſaying, *Babylon is fallen*. It may be, they or ſome of them, can boaſt of one thing more (and pity it is but if they can they ſhould) *viz.* that they did help to bring down that which they call *Babylon*. If ſo, ſpeak out and be canonized for what you have done; but, whether you will or no, time will either condemn or abſolve you. As for ſome of that Religion, I do in my thoughts acquit them preſently, from either contributing to the deſtruction of *London*, or rejoycing in it now it is done, as believing the ſweetneſs of their temper, and the morality of ſome of their principles to be ſuch, as would not

ſuffer

suffer them to do either, and God forbid that they should suffer so much as by the mistrusts and jealousies of people concerning any such matter: But others of them again (the prodigious actings of men of the same perswasion in former times, the greatness of their own malice, and the desperateness of their principles considered) I dare not answer for, but shall leave it to those honourable persons wich examined all those matters, to clear and vindicate them, if they have found cause so to do. Should I hear any speak with joy of the burning of *London*, or otherwise express themselves to be glad of it, if I should judge themselves to have had a hand in it (and if I should judge amiss) they themselves would be greatly accessary to my unchari-tableness.

Whosoever they be, that think the destruction of *London* to be a ground of Joy, let them ring Bells and make Bonefires professedly upon that account, that the world may know them to be such Monsters as indeed they are. I think at present but of three persons, to whom I may fitly compare such men and women: the one is, that infamous execrable *Bonner*; such a feaster upon cruelty, that History tells us, He would not eat his dinner, till tidings were brought him that certain Martyrs were burnt (as if that had been the onely sawce that could make him relish his meat): the other is, that incarnate Devil *Nero*, who set *Rome* on fire, who was reckoned the Enemy of all mankind; who wisht, that whilst he lived Heaven and Earth might be turned into a Chaos, and whom one fitly called Πήλον αἵματι μεμιγμένον, *A mixture of clay and blood:* And lastly, to the Father of that prodigious *Nero*, and of all such as he, whose name is in the Hebrew Tongue,

Tongue, *Abaddon*, and in the Greek *Apollyon*, Rev. 9. 11. that is in Engliſh, *The Deſtroyer*. If the things you rejoyce at be the laying waſt ſo noble a place, the impoveriſhing and undoing ſo many hundreds of honeſt families, the demoliſhing of the ſtrongeſt Fort that *England* had for the defence of true Religion, and whatever elſe was and ought to have been dear to it; if any or all of theſe were and are the ground of your Joy, ſurely the Compariſons I have made are not too ſevere. Nay, let me tell you further, in the words of Scripture, *Pſalm* 37. 13. *The Lord ſhall laugh at you, for he ſeeth your day is coming*: and, as it is in *Prov.* 1. 26. *God will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh: When your fear cometh as deſolation, and your deſtruction as a whirlwind; when diſtreſſe and anguiſh cometh upon you.* I love not to imprecate, but may probably enough predict concerning you, as the Prophet *Jeremy*, concerning the Enemies of the Jews, *Lam.* 1. 21, 22. of whom he thus ſpeaks, *All mine enemies have heard of my trouble, they are glad: Thou wilt bring the day that thou haſt called, and they ſhall be like unto me*: He adds, *Let all their wickedneſs come before thee, and do unto them as thou haſt done unto me.*

I am not without hope that the malicious, and inhumane Inſulters over *London*'s downfal may greatly contribute (though quite beſides their intention and much againſt their wills) towards the rebuilding and reflouriſhing of that once-renowned City, neither have I built that hope upon any other than a Scriptural foundation, namely, thoſe words of *Solomon*, Prov. 24. 18. *Rejoyce not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thy heart be glad, when he ſtumbleth, Leſt the Lord ſee it, and it diſpleaſe him, and he turn away his wrath from him.*

MED.

MEDITATION XLVI.

Of the burning of Sodom *and* Gomorrah, *compared with the burning of* London.

AS for the burning of *Sodom*, and the cities round about it, all but *Zoar*, it muſt be confeſſed that in ſeveral reſpects it did tranſcend that of *London*. For, firſt of all we read in *Gen.* 19. 24. *That the Lord did rain upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah, brimſtone, and fire from the Lord out of heaven.* Thoſe places were deſtroyed by a meer miracle (which was no ſmall aggravation of the judgement, as it is of mercy when men are ſaved by miracle) but ſo was not *London* conceived to have been. Nextly, the fire upon *Sodom* (and the three other Cities conſumed with it) deſtroyed not only a major part of thoſe Cities but the whole. But the Beeſom of deſtruction, which ſwept *London*, did not ſweep ſo clean but God hath left ſome ſmall remnant of City, that it might not be like *Sodom*, and like *Gomorrah*, *Iſai.* 1. 9. Thirdly, the fire upon *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* did conſume, not only places, but perſons; not only four Cities, but the greateſt part of their inhabitants, *Gen.* 19. 25. But to the praiſe of diſtinguiſhing-mercy be it ſpoken, the inhabitants of *London* were generally ſnatcht as fire-brands out of the fire, and ſo was part of their ſubſtance. Fourthly, *Sodom and Gomorrah are ſaid to ſuffer the vengeance of eternal fire*, Jude 7. Which expreſſion, ſo far as it is refer'd to the places themſelves, doth ſignifie that they were irrecoverably deſtroyed by fire, ſo as that they ſhall eternally lie waſt. But concerning *London*, we hope and have rea-

reason to hope better things, and that she may say to her insulting enemies, *Rejoyce not over me; For though I fall, yet shall I rise again*, &c. Fifthly,

As if one destruction had been too little (and that by fire too) *Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah*, and *Zeboim*, were destroyed by water also; that whole Countrey being turned into a standing stinking Lake, *which at this day is called the Dead Sea*, and in the Scripture *the salt-sea*, Gen. 14. 3. Though formerly it was *even as the garden of God, or as the land of Egypt for fruitfulness*, Gen. 14. 10. The Salt-sea it is supposed to be called from the Sulphurous combustions, first occationing it: and the Dead-sea, because the Charnel-house of so many dead Carcasses, then destroyed therein, or becaufe it is quickned by no visible motion, or becaufe it kills all creatures that come into it. Several marks of God's curse it retains to this day. Though it be a Sea, yet neither can fishes live in it, nor ships sail in it, neither hath it intercourse with any other seas or communion with the Ocean, lest it should infect other waters with its malignity, neither doth any healthful thing grow thereon; God having blasted it (as it were) as Christ did the barren fig-tree. *Solinus* calls it a Melancholy Bay, which the black-soil thereof, being also turned into ashes, witnesseth to have been blasted from heaven. I read of nothing that appeareth good in & about *Sodom* since its destruction, but a certain Apple, and that doth but appear so neither; for though it appear fair to the eye, yet within the rind of it, is nothing but an Ember-like Soot, which being lightly pressed evaporates into smoak, and becomes dust. Lastly, I might adde that God would not permit *Lot* and his wife, to testifie their respects and com-

compaſſion towards *Sodom*, when the ſmoak thereof went up like a furnace, by caſting ſo much as one look back upon it; which *Lot's* wife preſuming to do became a pillar of Salt, *Geneſis*, 19. 26. In all theſe reſpects was the deſtruction of *Sodom* greater, than that of *London*; Yet, Who is able to ſay, Their ſins were greater, all things conſidered? *London* had wherewithal to make its ſins more out of meaſure ſinful than were thoſe of the *Sodomites*: *It may be more tolerable for the Land of Sodom and Gomorrah at the day of Judgment, than for* ſome *Londoners*, (though the Judgement upon *London* at the preſent be leſs intolerable of the two,) *Mat.* 10. 15. *For, if the mighty works which have been done in London, had been done in Sodom*, poſſibly it had remained to this day, *Matt.* 11. 23.

If any ſhould ſay, It is but juſt that the place where *Sodom* ſtood, ſhould be turned into a *ſtanding-Lake*, in memorial of the great Idleneſs of the Inhabitants: That it ſhould be turned into a *Dead-Sea*, ſo called, from its killing all creatures that come near it, in remembrance, how the *Sodomites* did, or would have corrupted all perſons that came near them, even the Angels themſelves that were *Lot's* gueſts: That the place where thoſe Cities ſtood, ſhould have no communion with any other place; ſhould be an exception from that rule, that, *All Rivers run into the Sea*, viz. by way of puniſhment for that unlawful communion which they had wont to have one with another, changing the natural uſe to that which is againſt nature; or that it ſhould be a *Dead-Sea*, becauſe the Inhabitants living in pleaſures, *were dead whilſt they live*; as is ſaid of Widows that ſo live: or, that no good thing ſhould

grow

grow there, becauſe ſo many good creatures of God had wont to be abuſed by them, one of whoſe ſins was fulneſs of bread meaning Luxury; That the fair Apple which grows there having nothing within it but Soot and aſhes, was an emblem and ſignification of their being burnt to aſhes for luſting after Beauty. I ſay, if any will ſo diſcant upon the deſtruction of *Sodom*, how eaſie were it to aſſign as many and as ſtrong Reaſons, why God might have dealt by *London* as he dealt with *Sodom*? When *Londoners* are ready to ſay, No miſery like theirs, let them think of *Sodom*, and the Inhabitants thereof; betwixt whom and themſelves, not their own merits, but Gods great mercy, hath made a very wide difference.

MEDITATION XLVII.

Of the burning of Troy *and the circumſtances thereof, compared with that of* London.

TIme was, when that place which was ſince called *London*, went by the name of new-*Troy*, and as it ſometimes bore the ſame name, ſo they both came to the ſame end, *viz.* by fire. Old *Troy* was fired not accidentally, but wilfully and by Enemies; and ſo ſome think was New-*Troy*, otherwiſe called *London*. Admit the ſtory of *Troy* be partly fictitious (as things related by Poets are ſuſpected to be) yet give me leave to moralize it as followeth: Is is reported, that *Priamus* giving leave to his Son *Paris*, to raviſh *Helena*, Wife to *Menelaus* King of *Sparta*, was that which forced the Greeks, who burnt *Troy*, to renew their ancient quarrel againſt it. I think, there have been few Tragedies acted

acted in the world, but the luſt of the fleſh hath born a ſhare in, and been one great occaſion of them. I cannot ſay, it was that which did provoke men to burn *London*, if it were done by wilfull inſtruments; but I doubt not, but that was one of the ſins which did provoke God to ſuffer that goodly City to be burnt. Was not *Paris* his treacherous ſlaying of *Achilles*, who was in treaty of Marriage with his ſiſter *Polyxena*, another incentive to the *Grecians* to deſtroy *Troy*? The unrighteous ſhedding of blood is a ſin, that will as eaſily kindle a fire as moſt that can be mentioned. The *Greeks* (as is ſaid) had it revealed to them, that unleſs they could do three things, *Troy* could never be deſtroyed: One was, they muſt get the *Palladium*, or image of *Pallas* out of the City, (which, *Virgil* ſaith, they did by means of *Ulyſſes*). *Pallas* was counted the Goddeſs of wiſdom. Had not the *Palladium* been taken away, for the time; or had thoſe that were concern'd been ſo wiſe at firſt, as they were at laſt, *London* had ſcarcely been burnt to the ground in ſpight of all the treachery that was ſuſpected, or could have been uſed. Another thing was, If they would deſtroy *Troy*, they muſt provide a great Wodden-horſe, which accordingly they did, putting ſome of their choiſeſt men into the belly of it, which pretending to dedicate to *Minerva*, they left before the City, having made it higher than the gates, hoping, as it proved, that the *Trojans* would pull down part of the wall, to take it in, whilſt they had withdrawn themſelves to the Iſland *Tenedot*. The *Trojans* brake down the wall, took in the horſe, placed it in the Caſtle: but in the night *Sinon* who was one of thoſe *Grecians*, that were in the Horſe's belly, giving notice by fire, the *Greeks*

came from *Tenedos*; who finding the *Trojans* had drunk themſelves faſt aſleep, ſackt the City, and burnt it. Thus *Troy* periſhed, partly by the Credulity, Security, Weakneſs, and Intemperance of it's Inhabitants, in a little time after it had for ten years together, withſtood the fruitleſs attempts of its adverſaries. Was there not ſome ſuch thing went to the deſtruction of *London*? Were there not a ſort of men within that City (as is vehemently ſuſpected) who might not unfitly be compared to the *Greeks* that were hid in the Belly of the forementioned Wodden-horſe, people of a concealed Religion, (and therefore I call them hid); and amongſt the reſt was there not one *Sinon*, as I may call him, becauſe he was the firſt that kindled the fire (witneſs his own confeſsion)? Had not the Gates of *London* been ſet too wide open for ſuch treacherous *Greeks* to enter in, poſsibly that famous City had been ſtanding to this very day. But what was a Proverb concerning *Trojans*, *Sero ſapiunt Phryges*, The *Trojans* uſe to be wiſe when it is too late, was too applicable to our ſelves. We begin to wiſh the gates of *London* had been ſhut againſt ſuch dangerous Perſons, when alaſs! in ſome places it hath no Gates to ſhut. It is likely, the Gentlemen that lay Couchant before, in the Belly of the Woodden-horſe, are now not without greater hopes than ever that they ſhall get up and ride. *But he that ſits in heaven can make* the ſecond of *September* produce them as little good, as did their infamous fifth of *November*. But why was it that *London* was deſtroyed by the ſame means as was old *Troy*? Will any ſay that the old Proverb, that ſuch a one is a truſty *Trojan*, was as applicable to the new *Trojans*, as to the old? I do not think that was the reaſon.

For

For though there might be some faithless men in *London* (as there are in all places;) yet I doubt not, but *Londoners* (take one with another) might and may safely be trusted, as far as any sort of men; and have as much Faith and Conscience amongst them as is elsewhere to be found. But, that God who found sin enough in *Job* to justifie all that he did against him, all the evil he brought upon him, could not but have a sufficient controversie with *London*: which, absolutely considered, was bad enough; though, if compared with other places and People, it was certainly one of the best.

MEDITATION XLVIII.

Upon the Burning of Jerusalem, *compared with the Burning of* London.

MAny Prodigies there were, as *Josephus* tells us, that went before the destruction of *Jerusalem* by *Fire*, namely, that a great Gate of the Temple, which twenty men could hardly pull open, opened of its own accord; and, that an *Ox* brought forth a *Lamb* in the Temple; with several others, which I forbear to mention: These were dark Texts for men to expound, yet, some did venture to give the sense and meaning of them, as if each of them had been a token for good, whereas the event did manifest the quite contrary. So was the destruction of *London* ushered in with several Prodigies, Blazing-Stars, and others, which did precede it at no such distance of time, but that it was probable enough they might refer to the Fire, as well as to the foregoing Pestilence. Neither may we doubt, but there were some who did pur a

good construction upon those ill-Signes, as if they had been fore-runners of the good things, which they themselves expected in the year -66; though as to their enemies they might have an ill-aspect, and ominous signification: Thus far some involved themselves in the same practise with the *Jews* of old, and God hath involved them in the same kind of calamity. It is dangerous doing as *Jews*, lest we suffer as they.

But, besides Prodigies, there were also sundry Propheſies, which did precede the destruction of *Jerusalem*. *Christ* fore-told it at large, as is reported by several *Evangelists*, with the several antecedents and concomitants of it; how, *That the Sun should be darkned, and the Moon not give her light*, Matt. 24.29. There were also humane Propheſies concerning it, as particularly by that Man, who ran thorough the Streets of *Jerusalem*, and cried *Woe to it* several dayes together; which, considering what *Christ* himself had said, was at no hand to be slighted. We find no Text in Scripture Propheſying the burning of *London*, and in such a year; but I have heard that some did confidently assert, before any thing of the Fire did happen, that *London* would be burnt in the year -66: as others had done, that it would be visited with a great Plague in -65: VVhich things coming to pass accordingly, may reasonably incline us to believe, that God, (though by what way and means we know not,) had imparted the fore-knowledg of that Event to such as did peremptorily Propheſie concerning it: For, though it be too much credulousneſs to believe a Human Propheſie before it be fulfilled; yet to diſ-believe, that it

Mat. 24.
Mark 13.
Luk. 21.5.
Luk. 19.44.

it was a real Propheſie, when it is fulfilled, is on the other hand too much moroſeneſs and incredulity: It is not unuſual with God to reveal to one or other thoſe great and ſtrange things which he is about to do in the World; though becauſe there are many falſe pretenders to Revelations, we ought to ſuſpend our belief of ſuch things delivered to us by others, till the event do atteſt them.

The burning of *Jeruſalem*, at leaſtwiſe of the Temple, is ſaid to have been begun by one of *Veſpatian*'s Souldiers, contrary to his known will and pleaſure; but, when it was once begun, there were many more that did help it forward, with an eye to gain and plunder. So the burning of *London* ſeems to have taken its firſt riſe from one hand, *viz.* His that ſuffered for it; but is vehemently preſumed to have been carried on by many more of the ſame ſtamp: Before *Jeruſalem* was ſet on fire, it had endured a cloſe Siege, and a terrible Fire, of which thouſands, yea millions of People died. No Siege or Famine, (bleſſed be God!) but a very terrible Plague is well known to have preceded the burning of *London*. One judgment going off without its deſigned effect, doth not exempt men from, but tranſmit them to another; as, where one of *Pharaoh*'s Plagues ended, another began, he ſtill *refuſing to let* Iſrael *go*. Some part of *Jeruſalem* was left ſtanding, *viz.* the Weſt-end of the Wall, and three Towers for their ſtrength and beauty, preſerved by the command of *Titus*, to bear teſtimony of the ſtateline's of the City to poſterity. So, by the Providence of God, was, and is a tenth part of *London*, or thereabouts, preſerved to this day, as it were, in memorial of what *London* was. It muſt needs be confeſſed, that the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*

ruſalem was far greater than that of *London*, all things conſidered; becauſe millions of *Jews* were put to the ſword, beſides ſeveral other cruelties that were inflicted upon others of them; one whereof was, that upon a miſtruſt that ſome of them had ſwallowed gold, two thouſand of them were ript up by the Souldiers hoping to have rob'd thoſe Mines, which made them Goldfinders, but not in ſuch a ſenſe as they expected to have been. Theſe were aggravations of miſery, which Londoners were exempted from (thanks to His infinite goodneſs, who in judgement was pleaſed to remember mercy). But it is not ſo much the diſparity as the parallel betwixt the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem* and of *London*, that I aim to ſpeak of; whereof I ſhall adde two inſtances: one is this, *Jeruſalem*, and *London*, were both fired in the ſame moneth, *viz. Septem'er*; which moneth hiſtory informs us to have been fatal to many other Cities, and, as I take it, to *Jeruſalem*, more then once. Laſtly, *Jeruſalem* was ſet on fire, by *Romans*: and, as is ſtrongly ſuſpected, By *Romaniſts* too was *London* burnt. If it were otherwiſe, may their Innocency appear, and may thoſe worthy Patriots, who had the matter under examination, acquit them before all the world.

MEDITATION XLIX.

Upon People's taking the firſt and greateſt care to ſave thoſe things from the Fire, which they did moſt value.

WHo knows not, that the method which men uſed in removing, was, firſt to ſend away their Wifes and Children, (as being their greateſt treaſure)

treaſure); next to them, their Writings of conſequence, ſuch as Books of accompt, Bills, Bonds, and others of great moment; and after them, their firſt and greateſt care was, to ſecure their Jewels (ſuch as had any), their Caſh, their Plate, and ſuch like precious things. Next to them, their care was for their Shop-goods, and firſt for thoſe that were of greateſt price. In a word, what things men did moſt value, thoſe they did labour in the firſt place to ſecure, deferring the removal of their lumber to the very laſt, ſo that for want of time much of that was conſumed. So *Jacob*, prizing *Rachel* and her Children above the reſt of his family, took the greateſt care to ſecure them, by putting them in the rear of his Company, when he went out to meet his Brother *Eſau*, coming againſt him in a hoſtile way; *but the handmaids and their Children he put in the front* (and, as it were, in the forlorn-hope) expoſing them to moſt danger, for whom he had leaſt love and reſpect, *Gen.* 33. 2. Alas! that men ſhould uſe a worſe method in reference to ſpiritual things, than they naturally fall into in relation to temporals. For how ordinary is it with men, in matters of Religion, to commit ὕστερον πρότερον, which our Engliſh Proverb doth phraſe, *Setting the Cart before the Horſe*, or, ſetting that firſt which ſhould be laſt? How many take care to ſave the lumber of Religion, as I may call it, whilſt, mean time, that better part of it which is like Plate and Jewels, is in danger to be loſt? So did thoſe *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, who took great care to pay *tithe of mint, aniſe, and cummin, and omitted the weightier matters of the Law*, viz. *Judgment, Mercy*, and *Faith*, *Mat.* 23. 23. There are ſome Truths unſpeakably greater, and of more conſe-

quence, than others. Thoſe ſhould moſt of all be contended for.

There are ſome enemies to our Religion, which would not onely build with hay and ſtubble, but even lay another Foundation beſides that which is laid, *viz.* The Lord Jeſus Chriſt, though other Foundation, that will bear, can no man lay, 1 *Cor.* 3. 11. Such ſhould moſt of all be contended againſt. For, others are but diſparately oppoſite to us, as Green to Yellow, and other intermediate colours are to White; but ſuch, are as quite contrary to us, as Black can be to White. Some Duties there are, the performance whereof are, as it were, the very Pillars of a Church, which it cannot ſtand without. Others again, are for their nature more diſputable, for their uſe more indifferent and leſſe neceſſary. God forbid, but the firſt of theſe ſhould alwayes take place of the laſt, and that we may more regard thoſe things of which Chriſt ſaith, *Theſe things ought you to have done*; and then thoſe other, of which he ſpeaketh more diminutively, ſaying, *And the other you ſhould not have left undone.*

There are certain ſins, which, *Sampſon*-like, do take hold upon the Pillars of the Houſe, I mean, Church and State, and threaten to pull it down. How prepoſterous would it be to puniſh peccadillo's with Scorpions, and let ſuch crimes of the firſt magnitude ſcarce be puniſhed with Rods? What men did in relation to the Fire, may ever teach them, to mind thoſe things in the firſt place, which are of greateſt conſequence. If men had Iron-ware and Gun-powder in the ſame Shop, did they not ſtrive to remove their Gun-powder before their Iron, becauſe that would do moſt hurt. It

is

is the Apoſtle's rule, that all things ſhould be done decently and in order. To begin with thoſe things which are moſt neceſſary, and then proceed gradually to thoſe which are of leſs conſequence, is one of the moſt neceſſary pieces of Order that can be obſerved. It is a good rule, that we ſhould firſt do thoſe things that muſt be done, and afterwards thoſe that may be done. *Joſeph* was overſeen in preſenting *Ephraim* to his Father's left hand, and *Manaſſeh* to his right; and *Jacob* obſerving it, laid his right hand upon *Ephraim*, and his left upon *Manaſſeh*, *Gen.* 48. 14. In like manner, there is frequent cauſe for us to croſs our hands, and place our right where we are moved to place our left; nothing being more incident to us, than to mind thoſe things in the laſt, which we ought to regard in the firſt place. By as good reaſon as men ſecured their Wives and Children before their goods; their Gold and Silver before their lumber, ought men, who know their ſouls to be more worth than all other things, firſt of all to ſecure them from that worm that never dyes, from that fire that never will go out.

MEDITATION L.

Upon ſome who, ſoon after the Fire, could hardly tell where about their own houſes did ſtand.

SO it was, that ſome who attempted to viſit the Ruines and Reliques of thoſe Houſes in which they dwelt, (not above a week before,) though they found the Street in which they ſtood, yet had much ado to be certain which was the ground they ſtood upon. He that ſhould have told them but

one

one day before the Fire began, that within five or six dayes, they being in *London*, and in the ſame Street where their dwelling was, ſhould not be able to find the way to their own Houſes, (where they had lived, it may be, twenty years and upwards,) would have been lookt upon as mad, or replied to in ſome ſuch language as this; What ſhould aile us? Shall we be out of our wits within that time? or, Shall we be ſtruck with blindneſs as the *Sodomites* were, that ſought for *Lots* door? or, if ſo, we think we could find our own Houſes blindfold, or in the darkeſt night, at ſo ſmall a diſtance: or, Shall *London* be changed as much as *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*? which were fair Cities, but are now a filthy Lake: Or how, and by what means ſhould it be ſo much altered? He did not more expreſs his admiration and disbelief of what was foretold in another caſe, who ſaid, *If God would make Windows in Heaven, how could this be?* than moſt men would have expreſſed theirs as to this: Yet do we ſee the thing, which could enter into no mans heart to conceive, till he ſaw it is come to paſs. Methinks it is ſad to hear men, that knew *London* well enough before, as they walk along the Ruins, asking at every turn, Which is the way to ſuch a place? and, What ſtreet is this? and, What Street is that? But yet more ſad, to think of men, that have ſought their own Houſes, not far from the place where they had wont to ſtand, and could not eaſily find them. There is a phraſe in Scripture, of *Mens places knowing them no more*: but, in this caſe that phraſe was inverſed, *viz. Men, for the time, knew their places no more.* Oh ſtupendious Judgment! I ſee it is eaſie for God to do ſuch things as are hardly poſſible for men to believe, till they ſee them done. So true is it, that

the

the wayes of God are above our wayes, and his thoughts above our thoughts, as much as the Heavens are above the Earth. How good is it then to be armed againſt all ſorts of evil, not only ſuch as are likely and probable, but even thoſe which are no more than poſſible? and, What evil is there which he cannot inflict, to whom all things are poſſible? For ought I ſee, no man is ſecured againſt any kind of Judgment, but he, that is ſecured againſt all (in ſome ſenſe,) by vertue of that promiſe, Prov. 12. 21. *No evil ſhall happen to the juſt*: with others of the ſame import. Nothing could be more improbable, than that ſo many Calamities of different kinds ſhould befall *Job*, not ſucceſſively, but at one and the ſame time, viz. The *Sabeans* taking away his Cattel, and killing his ſervants, *Job* 1. 14. And, that whilſt the firſt Meſſenger was yet ſpeaking, another ſhould come, and tell him, that *fire, falling from Heaven, had burnt up his ſheep and his ſervants*; and, that before the words were out of his mouth, another ſhould come and inform him, *That the Caldeans had carried away his Camels, and ſlain others of his ſervants*; and, that before he had made an end of his ſtory, another ſhould come and tell him, *That a great Wind had killed his Sons and Daughters, by throwing down the houſe upon them where they were eating and drinking together*; and that only one perſon ſhould eſcape each of theſe dangers; being reſerved, as it were, on purpoſe to bring him the tidings of it: Such a conſpiracy of Providences (as I may call it) to ſtrip a man of all his Comforts at once, could ſcarce have been imagined, till the event did declare it: Unexpected and unimaginable miſeries are not much more rare than unexpected and unlookt-for Mercies.

Upon

Upon this occasion, I cannot but think of three other sorts of houses (as we may term them) which men have or may seek for and not be able to find. First, our bodies they are the Houses or Tabernacles in which our souls dwell, (as he said, *Animæ Galbæ male habitat*, *Galba*'s soul dwelt in an ill-body) when those houses shall be crumbled away to dust, or devoured of worms, who will be able to find them or to say, Which were they? The Graves of men they are the Houses or Receptacles of their dead bodies, *Job* 17. 13. *If I wait, the grave is my house, and the grave is called the house appointed for all living Job* 30. 23. How many such houses as those could not be found, if they should never so carefully be sought for? How ordinarily are the dead turned out of possession, and the living come in their room? that is; Charnel-houses have been turned into dwelling-houses, and many more such instances are like to be: so that it hath and will become impossible, not only to know the bodies of dead men again, but their very graves. And the then Earth it's self, that is as it were the house of all graves, the great *Golgotha*, or *place of skulls*: Now when that time shall come which is spoken of, 2 *Pet.* 3. 10. in which *the earth and all the works that are therein shall be burnt up*, that great House of houses and graves, if it be sought for, will be found no more.

MEDITATION LI.

On the Statue of Sir Thomas Gresham *left standing at the* Old-Exchange.

HOw great and particular a respect did the Fire shew to the Effigies of that worthy Knight,

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the honurable Founder of that which was the *Royal-Exchange*, and doner of *Gresham-College*, (which, for present, succeeds in the room of it;) I say, how great a respect, by the appointment of Divine Providence, (without which not a hair falleth from our heads) did that Fire shew to his Effigies in particular, which it left standing and undefaced, whilst mean time the Statues of all the Kings and Queens of *England* since the Conquest, were demolished and thrown down by it. No man could have answered it, to have put more honour upon a fellow-Subject, than upon his lawful Prince, much lesse upon one Subject than upon many that had swayed the Scepter within his native Soil (for certainly there is an honour which Kings, as Kings, may challenge from their own people, greater than is due to any of their Subjects): but God, who is the King of Kings, may do what he please, He may *pull down the mighty from their seats, and exalt them of low degree*, as it is, *Luke* 1. 52. Men must have regard to political claimes and rights, in dispensing their respects, and give honour to whom honour is due upon that account: but moral considerations are those which the Great God takes notice of, who is otherwise *no respecter of persons*, yet hath promised to *honour those that honour him*, and is alwayes observant, though not of mens secular dignities, yet of their real worth and deserts. Now it must needs be confessed, that no person upon earth had deserved so well of the *Royal-Exchange*, as that worshipful Knight had done, who both made and maintained it. Indeed it was called the *Burse* or *Purse* of the Kings and Queens of *England*, and theirs it was by Sovereignty and superintendency, by confirmation and countenance,

but

but it was only his by cost and charge, by creation and donation. They allowed it for an *Exchange*, and protected it as such, but he only built and upheld it, for that use and purpose. They were, as I may say, the God-fathers to that Noble Structure, which put their own names upon it; but he the Father which gave Being to it. Now, which of those two have most interest in a Child, is easy to judge, and that of the Poet may determine: *Et quæ nos fecimus ipsi, Haud ea nostro vico*, Things are principally theirs who made them. Yet this must be acknowledged, though he made it an Edifice, yet they made it an *Exchange*, by their Royal Sanction and designation: but, to do the former, *Hic labor, hoc opus erat.* And is all that cost and labour lost, which that generous Knight did bestow upon that noble Foundation? Surely no; For, besides the great service which that well-intended Structure did to the Nation for a hundred years together, such, and so great was the fragrancy of that precious ointment, which by him was poured out upon the head of *London* and of it's Inhabitants, that the savour thereof will never be out of their nostrils; nor shall they need the help of a standing *Exchange*, to remember so worthy a Founder by. Three signal marks of honour did the late desolating fire (or rather God, who is said to divide the flames of fire (which may be meant of distributing them as he pleaseth) put upon that renowned Benefactor. One was that I have been writing of, *viz.* the forbearance of his Effigies, and of his alone (as if the relation of a Founder and noble Benefactor, had put a peculiar sacredness into it.) You might have seen him (his Statue I mean) after the Fire safe and sound, as *Noah* was after the flood,

flood, the one having escaped a Deluge of Fire (if I may so call it) as the other did a deluge of Water: *Noah* was preserved by the visible and probable means of an Ark, in which himself and his family were imbarqued; but, all the Ark, or means of preservation which this worthy Knight had, was only the immediate Providence of God, which seemed to intend a particular respect, for and towards so great a Benefactor; reserving him, as we hope, (in Effigie I mean,) to see another Exchange, as *Noah* was, (but he indeed in Person,) to see another World, after the destruction of the first; whom for that reason the ancient *Poets* are supposed to have meant by him, they call *Janus*, with two Faces, for that he had faced two Worlds. Another badg of Honour put upon him was, the preservation of that other Famous-Building, known by the name of *Gresham-Colledge*, which that Noble Knight had long since given to a Publick-use; intimating, that he wisht no better Successors than the *Muses* in that House, in which himself did sometimes dwell. A third Honour which befel him at this time was, that his own Dwelling-House (that was) should, for the time being, and till the former can be built again, be made the Royall Exchange, as if no man could provide an Exchange fit to receive our Merchants, but their old Founder Sir *Thomas Gresham*: which thing is no small accession of dignity, to that place, which as a Colledge furnished with able Professors, and good Lectures, well indowed, was very Honourable before. Thus was the worthy Knight thrice dubbed (if I may so call it) after the first time, and that by the fire. Where then is the man that hath an estate commensurate with so great an undertaking,

that

that when he conſiders theſe things would not be ambitious, to do as Sir *Thomas Greſham* had done before him; I mean to build an Exchange in Lieu of that which now lieth in aſhes? What better way could he think of, whereby to perpetuate his name to all Poſterity? or wherein could he better ſerve his Native-Countrey? Is there never a rich Batchelor devoted to a ſingle life? Nor yet any Childleſs (and almoſt kindred-leſs) Widower that hath Gold and Silver enough to compaſs ſuch a glorious work as that? thereby he may acquire to himſelf a name, and a memorial in the world better then that of ſons and daughters. How oft do great eſtates (even ſufficient for ſo great an enterprize as I am ſpeaking of) fall into the hands of men that neither know how to uſe them whilſt they live, nor yet how to diſpoſe them when they die, either for their own honour, or for a publick good. Is it not eaſier to find ten men with ſuch eſtates, as Sir *Thomas Greſham* had, than one man with ſo Noble and generous a Spirit? I wiſh ſome men do not bequeath their money to not much better purpoſes, than if they had purchaſed Coals with it to ſend to *New-caſtle*, or thrown it into the Sea, rather then imploy it to ſo good, and charitable a Uſe, as is rebuilding of the Royal Exchange. Brave ambition to leave a name juſtly renowned amongſt men, if it be any thing of a vice, is, in appearance, ſo generous, and ſo like a virtue that ſome low-ſpirited men were never capable of it, nor can ever be made to feel the ſharpeſt Spurrs of Honour, ſo as thereby to be ſtimulated and quickned to Heroical Enterprizes. I am amazed to think that ſome, but ordinary men, have parted with their very lives, only to tell the world they were no Coward,

Cowards, or to leave a Name for valour behind them (which would be but nine days wonder) when others of better birth, and quality will not part so much as with their estates to good uses (no nor when they come to die) whereby to inform the world for ever, that they were lovers of their Countrey, as was said of that Centurion; *He hath loved our nation, and built us a Synagogue.*

MEDITATION LII.

Upon the Pillar appointed, and intended to be set up in remembrance of the burning of London.

IF *London* its self be not the doleful Monument of its own destruction, by always lying in Ashes (which God forbid it should) it is provided for by Act of Parliament, that after its restauration a Pillar either of Brass or Stone, should be erected in perpetual memory of its late most dismall conflagration. Herein (for ought I know) hath the pious care of this age exceeded all former: For though History telleth us, that *London* hath several times been burnt, yet that any such Memorial was set up, whereby to inform and warn all after ages, I cannot call to mind that I ever read. May we uniformly transcend the piety of former ages, as well in all other things as we have done in this, then shall we not need to doubt, but as our greater sins have of late years procured us greater judgements, (one in the neck of another) than have formerly been known in so quick a succession (*viz.* of Sword, Pestilence, and Fire;) so our transcen-

dant Reformation will end in greater blessings than former ages have been acquainted with.

It is not without several Patterns and Presidents in Scripture, that Memorials should be erected, as well of Judgements, as of Mercies; For, not only did *Jacob* set up a Pillar of Stone in the place where God talked with him, and fastened the name of *Bethel* upon it, *Gen.* 35. 14. in remembrance of the great Favour there vouchsafed him; but, God himself, to commemorate his great displeasure against *Lot*'s Wife, for looking back towards *Sodom* (which she ought not to have done *verse* 17.) *turned her into a Pillar of Salt*, (which may signifie a lasting Pillar, or a hard stiff Body of perpetual duration: (in which sense, the Covenant of God is called, *a Covenant of Salt*, that is, of perpetuity,) to season after-Ages with the remembrance of his judgment upon her: We read of the *Brazen-Censers of Korah and his Company, those sinners against their own souls* (as they are called); that they were *made into broad-Plates for a covering of the Altar, to be a memorial to the children of Israel, that no stranger, that is, not of the seed of Aaron come near to offer incense before the Lord, that he be not as Korah and his company*, Numb. 1. 16. 39. We read also of a great Stone called *Abel*, which word signifieth Grief; and that name seemeth to have been given it because of the Lamentation which the People made over those *Bethshemites*, that were slain for looking into the Ark, 1 *Sam.* 6. 18. The *Philistims* themselves, when smitten by God with *Emerods*, and plagued with *Mice*, are said to have presented the Lord with certain Monuments of those judgments that were upon them, *viz.* with so many *Golden Emerods* (or figures of *Emerods*,) and so many *Golden Mice*, as

a Trespasse-offering, 1 Sam. 6. 4, 5. *Wherefore ye shall make Images of your Emerods, and of your Mice, which mar the Land; and shall give glory to the God of Israel: peradventure he will lighten his hand from off you, from off your gods, and from off your Land*: which plainly shewes, that even those blind Heathen did look upon the due Commemoration of Judgments, as a thing well-pleasing unto God; and we are assured it is so, by the complaint which God maketh of the *Israelites*, their forgetting the *great things* which God *had done in Ægypt, and terrible things by the Red-Sea*, (meaning the drowning of *Pharaoh* and all his Host there, *Psal.* 106. 21.) And the Apostle writing of what had befallen the murmuring *Israelites*, 1 Cor. 10. 6. saith, *These things are our examples, that we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted*; Therefore, remember them we must, or else we can take no warning by them.

He that questioneth the needfulness of erecting a Pillar, or some other Monument, to commemorate the late dreadful Fire, may see his Error, if he do but consider, that *London* (though not such a *London* then, as this was,) hath formerly been burnt several times, (and did once continue in ashes four-score and five years together,) and yet the generality of men now living in these parts, were so far from considering and awing their hearts with the remembrance of it, that but here and there a man doth so much as know that any such thing was ever done.

How vain a thing is it for Papists to beat us in hand, That Orall-Tradition is sufficient to transmit Religion to the World; and is the great thing we are to rely upon; when, but for the Writings of *Historians*, we had all been

De Dunstan. Hist. Col. 114. 8. 131. 161. 213 263.

ignorant of so remarkable a thing, as was the burning of *London* five several times, *viz. Anno Domini* 798, and *Anno* 801; and again *Anno* 982, and again, *Anno Domini* 1087. and after that in the year 1133, which was little more than five hundred years agoe: Had our *Parliament* had any such confidence in Orall-Tradition, they had never designed a Pillar for the memorial of a Fire so hard to be forgotten.

How weakly do *Papists* Argue, that the Authority of the Scriptures is built upon the Church, and the Church its self Infallible: because it is called, *The Pillar of Truth*, 1 *Tim.* 3. 15. Whereas Pillars are many times erected for other uses, than to uphold and under-prop buildings; as the several Instances which I have brought from Scripture, of Pillars, set up only as Monuments and Memorials; and, the use to which the Pillar I am now treating of, is to be applied, do plainly prove: Such a Pillar is the Church, *viz.* to transmit the memory of Religion, or rather that Inscription, (the Scriptures I mean,) which are the great memorial thereof from one Age to another.

But, Will the intended matter of that Pillar, which is appointed to be either Brass or Stone, afford us nothing of a profitable Meditation? Methinks it should. What Mettal is there that more resembleth Fire than doth burnished-Brass? therefore in *Ezek.* 1. 7. we read, that the feet of the living Creatures there spoken of, did *sparkle like the colour of burnished-Brass.* It is but fit that the Memorials of things should bear as lively a resemblance as may be, of those things of which they are intended Memorials: So the *Philistims* made choice of Artificial *Mice* and *Emerods*, in remembrance

brance of those that were true and natural; Moreover, if *London* were consumed by Treachery, no mettal can be more fit to receive the Characters of their most Impudent Villany, who (as to that) had sinned with a Brow of Brass, and with a Whores Fore-head. Or, if Stone be chosen rather of the two, to make that Pillar of, be it a lasting Emblem of the Hardness of their hearts, (harder than the neither Milstone,) that could burn such a City, and ruin so many thousand Families, both for the present, and for many years, if not Ages to come.

Where the Fire began, there, or as near as may be to that place, must the Pillar be erected, (if ever there be any such.) If we commemorate the places where our Miseries began, surely the causes whence they sprang, (the meritorious causes, or sins, are those I now intend,) should be thought of much more. If such a Lane burnt *London*, Sin first burnt that Lane: *Causa causa est causa causati*; *Affliction springs not out of the dust*; not but that it may spring thence immeditely, (as if the dust of the Earth should be turned into Lice,) but primarily and originally it springs up elsewhere.

As for the Inscription that ought to be upon that Pillar, (whether of Brass or Stone,) I must leave it to their Piety and Prudence, to whom the Wisdom of the Parliament hath left it: Only three things I both wish and hope concerning it; The first is, That it may be very humble, giving God the glory of his righteous Judgements, and taking to our selves the shame of our great demerits. Secondly, That the Confession which shall be there Ingraven, may be as impartial, as the judgement its self was; not charging the guilt for which that

fire came upon a few only, but acknowledging that all have ſinned, as all have been puniſhed. Far be it from any man to ſay, that his ſins did not help to burn *London* that cannot alſo ſay (and who that is know not?) that neither he nor any of his either is, or are ever like to be, any thing the worſe for that dreadful fire. Laſtly, whereas ſome of the ſame Religion with thoſe that did hatch the Powder-plot, are, and have been vehemently ſuſpected to have been the Incendiaries, by whoſe means *London* was burned, I earneſtly deſire that if time, and further diſcovery, be able to acquit them from any ſuch guilt that *Pillar* may record their Innocency and may make themſelves, *as an Iron Pillar or Brazen Wall*, (as I may allude to *Jer.* 1. 18.) againſt all the accuſations of thoſe that ſuſpect them; but if indeed, and in truth that Fire either came, or was carried on and continued by their treachery that the Inſcription of the Pillar may conſigne over their names to perpetual hatred and infamy.

Though I have thought too long already upon this ſubject; yet, me-thinks, I cannot but muſe yet a little further, How men will or ought to be affected with ſeeing that Pillar, and reading ſuch an Inſcription, as, I preſume will be made upon it. Will they not reflect and ſay, Alas! Is the greateſt part of a famous City come to this? (or rather was it brought to this?) What nothing but a brazen Pillar in lieu of the major part of a renowned City? Doleful exchange; As the Angel we read of *Matth.* 28. 6. told the Women that came to Chriſts Sepulchre, *He is not here, for he is riſen.* So this *Pillar* ſtands but to tell men, that a glorious City, that ſometimes ſtood

hereabouts, is not here now: for it (or most of it) is burnt and gone.

How uncomfortable is this in comparison of the two Pillars we read of, *viz.* a Pillar of Cloud, and a Pillar of Fire, *Numb.* 14. 14. Those were Pillars for direction, but this was in token of destruction. In those God went before his people, by day and by night, but in the Fire, which occasioned this Pillar, he came against us. Then was God to his people as a Shadow from the heat of the, rage of their enemies, as a Wall of fire for their protection, but this Pillar calls that time to remembrance, in which God covered himself, as with a cloud, that the prayers of *Londoners* should not passe unto him, and came forth, not as a conserving, but a consuming fire, not for, but against poor *London*. Surely the place, where that Pillar shall stand, will be made a *Bochim*, for who will be able to passe by it, and not shed some tears? Yet as woful tidings as that Pillar is to be charged with, How do I long to see it once erected (which if I never do, God grant that others may) for surely, that will never be done, till men can say of *London*, as the Prodigals Father of his converted Son. It (as he) *was dead, and is alive again, was lost and is found.*

MEDITATION LIII.

Upon the Anniversary Fast appointed to be kept in remembrance of the Fire.

HOw do we play an after-game? *Yet better late than never*: What *Epimetheusses* are we? Now the City is burnt, we design to keep a perpetu-

al yearly Fast, whereas there is little doubt, but the burning of it might have been prevented, if, before that judgement came, we had set ourselves to keep such a fast, as is spoken of, Isa. 58. 6. *Is not this the Fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burthens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every Yoke*, &c. The *Ninivites* were wiser then we, for when *Jonah* preach'd to them, that *within forty dayes* Nineveh *should be overthrown*: They took that short warning, *proclaimed a Fast*, yea *and turned from their evil way, and God repented of the evil, that he had said he would do unto them*, Jonah 3. 10. We have now and then fasted after a sort, but was it not so? that God might justly expostulate with us, as with the *Jews* of old, *Is it such a Fast as I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his Soul: Wilt thou call this a Fast, and an acceptable day to the Lord?* But have we turned from our evil wayes? as the Ninevites are said to have done.

Preventing Fasts like preventing *Physick* are much the best, but when they have been omitted (or not observed (as they ought to be) which surely hath been our case) then curing or restoring Fasts (as I may call them) are exceeding necessary, as therapeutical or healing *Physick* is, where prophylactical or preventing remedies have not taken place.

A Fast both Anniversary and Perpetual is not without its president in scripture. The Jewes had such a Fast by Gods appointment, *Lev.* 16. 24. *This shall be a statute for ever to you, that in the seventh month ye shall afflict your souls*, vet. 34. *This shall be an everlasting Statute to you, to make an atonement for the Children of Israel for all their sins*

once

once a year. So it is, that the *Jews* their Anniversary Fast, or day of Atonements, I say theirs and ours were and are both in the seventh month of the Year (reckoning *March* the first, as it is upon a civil accompt) and this, we know, came to passe not by humane designation, but by the determination of divine Providence, which brought the Fire in *September*; and it was but meet, that the Fast, in relation to it, should be in the same month, and on the same day the Fire was: Yea, possibly the zeal of *Esther* (if such a thing had hapned in her time) would have continued the Fast as many dayes together, as the Fire it self did continue; for we read that *She fasted three dayes and three nights* together, *Esther* 4. 16. and it is probable would have held out one day longer, if so solemn an occasion had called her to it.

How suitable it is that a Fast should be proclaimed upon such an occasion as this were easie to make appear. Fasts are a kind of Sabbaths, for *Moses* speaking of the *Jews* their Anniversary Fast, *Lev.* 16. 31. saith *It shall be a sabbath of rest unto you, and ye shall afflict your soules by a Statute for ever.* Now the City resteth and injoyeth her Sabbaths in that doleful (if not ironicall) sense, in which that phrase is used, *Lev.* 26. 34. (*viz.* for a place that lieth desolate) reason good that Citizens should keep a Sabbath too, at leastwise every year, as that doth every day. When *London* lieth in ashes, why should not *Londoners* do so to? at leastwise for a season: When God hath humbled the City to the very dust, should not Citizens, in like manner, humble their selves under his mighty hand:

Neither is it without reason and scripture that a perpetual Fast should be kept upon accompt of a transient

transient judgement (if I may call this transient) or that the Ages to come should confesse and lament the sins and miseries of former times, or of the Ages that were before them. *Neh. 9. 2. They confessed their sins and the iniquities of their Fathers:* and Dan. 9. 16. *For our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, thy people are become a reproach.* There being Scripture for such a practice, doubtless there is reason enough for it: yet I question not, but a man may lawfully ask, What the reason is, or what cause can be assigned for our so doing? The most obvious Reasons seem to result from the Love we owe to God, the Relation in which we stand to our Ancestors and Forefathers, the Reverence which is due to the Judgements of God, and the bad influence which the sins of our Ancestors and Predecessors may have upon ourselves in case we lay them not to heart. We are sorry that those whom we dearly love have been injured by others (and not then only when we have injured them ourselves); yea, if we hear of any great wrong that was done them many years ago, we are troubled at it, and affected with it (though possibly not so much as if it were but yesterday). And will not true love to God cause us in like manner to resent the known injuries that have been done to him? (and such are all the great violations of his Law) yea, though by others, and many years since. If those that have wronged the persons we love, were such as were nearly related to ourselves (as when *Saul*, that was *Jonathan*'s Father, was very unkind to *David*, whom himself had a great affection for) it troubleth us so much the more. So would love to God cause us to do, when those from whose Loins we sprang (or who are otherwise

wiſe near to us), have greatly provok'd him, to whom all by paſt things (though even worn out of the memory of men) are alwayes as preſent. By this Rule, though ſucceſſors ought to mourn over the ſins of their predeceſſors, yet Children more eſpecially over the ſins of their Parents, or Proparents, and other Relations one of another. We reverence not the Judgements of God as we ought, if hearing what God hath done to others for the ſame ſins whereof ourſelves are guilty (more or leſs) we do not both mourn, and tremble, and humble ourſelves before the Lord, leſt he ſhould do as much to us, as God ſaith to the Iſraelites, *Jer.* 7. 12, 14. *Go and ſee what I did to* Shiloh, *I will do unto this houſe as I did to* Silo.

If ſuch conſiderations as theſe affect us not with the Sins and Judgements, which have gone over the heads of our Anceſtors in former times, then do we ourſelves become partakers of their ſins, and their ſins help to fill up the meaſure of ours: as we read *of the ſins of the Amorites not being yet full* (implying, that the ſins of the time preſent and time paſt, were thrown as it were into one meaſure); and as Chriſt ſpake to the perſecuting Jews, *Mat.* 23. 35. ſaying, *That upon them might come all the righteous blood, from the blood of* Abel *to the blood of* Zacharias. We read of God's *viſiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children, to the third and fourth generation*; and that he doth when they make them theirs, as by other means, ſo particularly by not mourning over them.

But if after-ages will not weep over the miſeries of this (which Hiſtory will not ſuffer them to be ignorant of), let them weep over their own loſſes by this Fire: for I doubt not, but ſome may ſmart under

der the consequences of it hundreds of years hence: forasmuch as some Estates were consumed by it, which might otherwise have been transmitted from Generation to Generation throughout several Ages to come. For ought I know, the fourth and fifth Generation from hence (to speak within bounds) may have just cause, even from the influence this Judgment may have upon themselves, to observe the second of *September* as a solemne Fast.

As for the good ends we may propound to ourselves in observing that day as a Religious Fast, they are so plain and visible as that nothing can be more. Solemnly to humble ourselves time after time, under this mighty hand of God, that may be one. To beg that God would build up the waste places in his good time, that may be another: as also, that he would make a gracious provision for his impoverished Servants: And lastly, To deprecate the like Judgement for time to come; several of which ends, if I mistake not, are hinted to us in the Act of Parliament.

But when I further consider it, how ghastly are the thoughts of another Fast? and that for Anniversary perpetuity? Alas! how do Fasts multiply upon us? and the causes of them much more? --Sixty five gave us just occasion for one perpetual Fast, with reference to the dreadful Plague that was in that year, and --sixty six by a no lesse dreadful Fire, hath given us another. Thus sin upon sin, hath made work for Fast after Fast. And the truth is, so many and so great are our sins at this day, that if God should punish each of them with a particular and proportionable Judgement, and every such Judgement should be commemorated with

with an Anniversary Fast, the whole year might consist of little else but Fasting-dayes: at leastwise all our Festivals be justled out, and all those Letters be cloathed with Mourning, that were wont to be clad, (as it were) in Scarlet. Admit that *London* should be built again, and swell to as great a bigness as it did before (the latter of which no person now living is like to see) yet even then there will be found just cause of Fasting, Mourning, and Lamentation, for the burning of *London* in 1666. the prints and footsteps whereof will even then be visible, though not by an outward desolation, yet by an inward and less perceptible decay. Though *London* may in process of time, come to look as well in the face as ever it did; yet it's inwards and vital parts will go nigh to remain greatly wasted and consumed.

But after I have insisted so long upon the Suitableness, Congruity, and Reasonableness of a yearly Fast in Relation to the Fire: It is fit I declare my self as to the nature and manner of the Fast I wish for, and which only will stead us, *viz.* Such a Fast as is spoken of, *Isa.* 58. 6, 7. then may we hope to see such a promise fulfilled as that, (of which we read) ver. 12. *And they that shall be of thee, shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations, and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, the restorer of paths to dwel in.*

MEDITATION LIV.

Upon the burning down of Zion-Colledge.

LOndon was an Epitome of *England* (if not also of the whole World.) In it was something of

of almost every thing; and amongst the rest, Colledges erected or designed for most kinds and parts of good Learning: only two of which I shall now instance in, *viz. Gresham* and *Zion*-Colledges. The former, which was to be for Divinity and other Sciences, yet standing; the latter, which was intended only for Divines, and for Theology, now lying in the dust. Doubtless, Learning is a great advantage and stay to Religion, as the Apostle himself intimateth, when he speaks of some *who being ignorant and unlearned, do wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction*; and if men (as much as in them is) would root Religion out of the world, they could use no means more effectual than that which *Julian* applied himself to, *viz.* the extinguishing of all good literature. This came to mind, when I remembred that Colledge to be yet standing, where Divinity and other Sciences dwelt together, though I am far from assigning that as the reason, why that Colledge rather than the other did escape the Fire.

But, my work is, to treat of those places that did not escape, and now particularly of *Zion*-Colledge. The place where that Colledge stood, from the first time that I can receive any account of it, was always a seat of Charity, first in the Ore (as I may call it) and afterwards refined. By Charity in the Ore, I mean, that which was popish and superstitious: For the first Foundation that I read of in that place was a Nunnery: After that, it was converted to an Hospital, in the year, 1332. for the relief of one hundred blind men, and was called the Priory or Hospital of Saint *Mary* the Virgin, founded by *William Elsing*, the which *William* became the first Prior there. In the same place

where

where that Priory was situated, was since erected the Colledge I am speaking of, for the Clergy of *London* and Liberties thereof, and for the sustentation of twenty poor people, ten men and ten women.

An exemplary and well-contrived piece of Bounty and Charity was the founding of that Colledge, and the Alms-houses thereunto belonging. Which I must needs speak in praise of those it's worthy Founders, whose Names should always live, though their Works be now demolished.

Of the Charity that built that Colledge, and the Library belonging to it, I can say no less, than that it was a Liberal, a Living, an Extensive, an Humble, and a Handsome respectful Charity, and in all those respects greatly Exemplary. That it was Liberal, appeareth by the quality of those two Divines, that were the Founders of it, one of the Colledge its self, *viz.* Doctor *Thomas White*, the other of the Library, *viz.* Master *John Simpson*. All the preferment that I can find either of these Gentlemen had in and from the Church, was, that the former was Vicar of Saint *Dunstans* in the West, and one of the Canons residentiary of Saint *Paul's* Church; *&c.* and the other, *viz.* Mr. *John Simpson* was onely Rector of Saint *Olave Hart-street*, *London*. Some men do a great deal of good with a little (the Church doth little for them, and yet they do much for it); others do but a little good with a great deal: Many, whose Titles and Ecclesiastical Revenues, have swelled ten times higher than either of theirs did, never were half so much Benefactors to the Church and world as was the least of them; but have hoorded up their money, as if they meant, when they left the world, to take it with them.

And

And, as their Charity was liberal, (which I may call intensive;) so was it no lesse extensive. Charity like seed, should not all be sown in one furrow, but scattered, some here some there; as the Scripture speaking of a good man, saith, *He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor, and his righteousnesse remaineth*: I say, their Charity was extensive, because first, it did reach and extend to soul and body both: yea, I might have said in the Apostles phrase, Soul, Body, and Spirit: There was provision made for the bodies of so many poor; there were helps to Learning, whereby to accommodate the minds and souls of such as were lovers of it; and lastly, there was Religion, or rather helps to Religion, (by the promoting of Divinity,) for the spirits of men: by which I mean the sublime faculties of men, which are more especially the seat and subjects of Religion. There was Charity shewed to both Sexes; so much to one as to another: whereas some Sensualists have no charity, but for that Sex which is not their own, (*Pharaoh*-like, who took care to save the females, though he gave charge to drown the males, as if they had been so many Mice:) And, certain Humorists on the other hand pretend to set their whole love upon their own Sex, professing themselves to be Misogynists, or haters of Women: which, whether in pretence or in reality, is another sinful extreme. Again, That Colledge was kind and Charitable, both to the Learned and Unlearned: as *Paul* saith, that he *was a Debtor both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish*: Whereas some, meer Schollars themselves, have no love for any but Learned men: and, others again have a kind of Antipathy to Schollars, as such. Lastly, The ex-

tensiveness

tensiveness of the Charity that gave that Colledge appeareth, in that it was a benefit both to Rich and Poor, (for, as to some things, those that are Rich may need help, as truly as those that are poor:) Thither might Persons of Quality, whose Libraries and usual Dwellings were in the Country, repair, and be furnished with those Books they could not meet with elsewhere.

An extensive Charity ought much to be imitated, because the Scripture saith, *Do good to all men*: And, one great fault of this Age is, That the Charity of men, (like their respects,) is confined in some, only to *Paul*'s in others, to *Cephas*; in others, to *Apollos*, (as I may allude:) but, the World will never be right, till men have learnt to love all good People as such.

On Mr. *Simpsons* part, who founded the Library, it was, as some call it, a Living-Charity; for, he built it in his life-time, at his own proper cost and charges; whereas some others have, in effect, said, That their Mony should go to good uses; when they had nothing else to do with it: then,) and not till then;) yea, possibly repented of that too, ere they died. I have moreover called it an humble-Charity, (a *Charity that did not vaunt it self*) because the aforesaid Founder of the Library did not scorn to build upon another mans Foundation, or to spend himself in adding to another mans Work; (who it was to be expected) would bear the name of the Principal Founder. Happy is he that can seek the good of others; and not seek his own honour at the same time; that, so others be benefited, doth not much care though himself be over-looked.

Lastly, I said, It was a handsome, and a respectful piece of Charity, and so it was: For, How no-

ble a Treatment did the Founder provide quarterly for those Ministers successively, for whose sake chiefly, or for whose use, he built that Noble Colledge. Forasmuch as he was pleased to give forty Pounds yearly for four Dinners for the Clergy, who were to Dine together in that Colledge, after they had broke their Fast with a good *Latin* Sermon.

A scornfull Charity is (as our Proverb phraseth it) but a bit and a knock; such, as all ingenuous persons, that can spare it, had as lief go without: but Charity, conferr'd with respect, is like a Diamond well-set, or a Picture placed in such a light, as sheweth it to the best advantage: It is good milk, well sweetned; whereas others, like our Proverb of the red-Cow, *Give good milk, and kick down part of it* again. All these things put together, methinks the Founders of that Colledg and Library, were noble Patterns of Charity; and therefore pitty it is, that their Colledge and their Names should lie in ashes together; that the latter should not remain as famous as ever, though the former be taken away. The respect which Schollars owe to the memory of *Sion-Colledge*, for the kindness intended to them in it, as also for the good which many have received from it, (where some I presume, got more Learning out of those publick Books, than others did out of those that were properly and peculiarly their own; Some throve upon the Common, better than others did upon their own rich Inclosures; some got more Learning for nothing, than others did out of costly Libraries of their own purchasing: would not permit me to say less of it than I have said; neither will I say much more concerning it.

Only one thing I must not fail to Observe, *viz.* That the Providence of God was pleased to watch over

over the greateſt part of the Library belonging to that Colledge, and to ſave it from the Fire. At firſt, there was a Colledge without a Library, and afterwards a Library-Houſe for ſome time without Books; Now, (thanks be to God,) there are Books good ſtore, but neither Colledge nor Library to place them in: But, Shall it be alwayes ſo? Are there no more *VVhites* and *Simpſons* to build another *Sion*-Colledge, with a Library to it, in the room of that which is burnt down? Methinks the very name of *Sion* ſhould invite ſome good man, one, or more, to ſuch a Work as that, having wherewithal to accompliſh it; or, if it were but in part, to contribute towards it: Doth the preſent Age afford no man equal in Eſtate and Charity to the two former Founders of that Colledge? whereof one was but a Parſon, the other but a Vicar. One would think there were a great many Perſons that have double and treble, yea ten-fold that preferment and Revenue, that ever they had: But, if no body will do it, (as far be it from me, to think, the World is grown ſo bad, as bad as it is,) I ſhall be prone to think, that the generation that now is hath abandoned all care of Learning, Religion, and Charity, or of any thing elſe but what men ſhould not care for.

MEDITATION LVI.

Upon Cittizens dwelling in Boothes, or Booth-like Houſes ſince the Fire, as in Moor-Fields, *&c.*

VVHat Wooden-Houſes are thoſe that many Cittizens of good faſhion are now forced, yea glad, to dwell in? May we call them Houſes? or are they any thing but Sheds, and Hovels, or Boothes, at moſt? Such as had wont to be ſet up

againſt *Bartholomew-Fair*, and took down again, when the *Fair* was ended: But now it is, as if ſome ſuch *Fair* as that, were continued all the year long. How are the Cittizens in *Moore-Fields* like an Army incamped, and lodging only within tents? How doth it bring to mind that feaſt of Tabernacles, Booths, or Bowers, which the Iſraelits were commanded to keep *Lev.* 23. 34. and that in the ſeventh month; it being alſo the ſeventh month (according to our accompt, beginning the year in *March*) which brought *Londoners* to this. The reaſon of obſerving the Feaſt of Tabernacles is ſet down, *Lev.* 23. 43. *viz. That your generations may know that I made the Children of Iſrael to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the Land of* Egypt. I ſuppoſe, it was in thankful acknowledgement, that, now they dwelt in houſes, they were much better accommodated than either themſelves or their Anceſtors were, when they dwelt in Booths.

Far beit from us to deſpair that *Londoners* in Gods good time may keep a Feaſt of Tabernacles in thankful remembrance that God, who ſometimes (as at this day) made them to dwell in Booths hath brought them to Houſes again; mean time, I wiſh they may be well contented with that ſmall convenience they enjoy and may conſider with themſelves, how much better it is to dwell in Tents (as it were) as now they do, than to lie in the open fields with only the Canopy of Heaven over their Heads (*ſub Dio, ſub Jove frigido*) as in the time of the fire many of them were conſtrained to do. *Jacobs* lodging was not ſo warm and ſo eaſy as is yours within thoſe tents, when he took ſtones for his pillows and ſlept upon them in the open air, and yet no night ever pleaſed him better, (as to the Dreams and Viſions of it); nor yet ſo much as that. From thence

he

he ſaid of the place where he lay, *That 'tis the gate of Heaven, Gen.* 28. 17. Of the Stones that were his Pillows, he made a Pillar of Thankfulneſs, and poured Oil upon the top of it (I ſuppoſe by way of Thank-offering); and vowed a Vow, that if he came again in peace, that Pillar ſhould be God's Houſe, *ver.* 22. meaning, that he would build a Houſe for God in that place. How much better and more comfortable are ſuch Booths, than thoſe mountains, Dens, and Caves of the Earth, where the primitive Chriſtians were forced to hide themſelves? Yea, was not Chriſt himſelf worſe accommodated, when he lay but in a Manger? nay, doth not another Text ſay, that *The ſon of man* (ſometime) *had not where to lay his head?* It was a long time, that God himſelf dwelt amongſt the Iſraelites but in a Tent or Tabernacle, the Ark I mean, which was the viſible Symbol of Gods preſence amongſt the Jews, (and is ſomewhere called by the name of God): For, till *Solomon*'s time, there was no Houſe or Temple for God to dwell in. Shall men think much to dwell a few months or years in ſuch a way as God himſelf dwelt amongſt men for many ages together? *Is the ſervant greater than his Lord?*

Bleſs God that you have weathered out a ſharp Winter, in which your cold lodging in thoſe thin paper-houſes (not much better Fences againſt wind and weather, than *Moſes* his Ark of Bull-ruſhes was againſt the water), and now a warm Summer is before you, in which thoſe ſlender Tabernacles may prove, not only tolerable, but pleaſant; and ſerve, as it were, for Countrey-houſes.

If men had had materials, as at other times, wherewith to have built ſtrong and durable habitations, where their booths now ſtand, they would

ſcarce have done it, becauſe they wait for a remove, and expect the good time when they may have opportunity, to dwell in or near the places where they dwelt before. Is there nothing to be learnt from thence? Why ſhould not all the proviſion we make for this World, be only ſuch, and ſo ſlender, as may argue us mindful, that *We have here no abiding City, but look for one to come, a City that hath Foundations, whoſe maker and builder is God?*

MEDITATION LVII.

Upon certain ſlight Timber-houſes that did eſcape the Fire, though better Houſes were burned on each ſide of them.

IT is plain, this Fire had a Commiſſion from above, what to take and what to leave, elſe it had never come to paſs, that thoſe houſes ſhould eſcape that were in moſt danger, *viz.* Slight, Old Timber-houſes, that were like ſo much tinder, (and ſome ſuch did eſcape) whilſt ſo many goodly Buildings and ſtately Fabricks, of Brick and Stone, (that ſeemed able to have made their own Defence) were conſumed by the Fire. It makes me think of Gods words to the Prophet *Jeremy*, 1.18. *Behold, I have made thee a defenced City, and an iron pillar and brazen walls againſt the whole Land. They ſhall fight againſt thee, but they ſhall not prevail againſt thee: for I am with thee, ver.* 19. Alas! What was one poor Prophet againſt ſo many Kings of *Judah*, Princes, Prieſts, and People (as is there expreſſed)? yet God ſaid, He would make him as a brazen Wall againſt them all: they ſhould not be able to prevail againſt him. So ſtood theſe poor Old-houſes, at a very ſmall diſtance from that Fire, which deſtroyed others at their right hand and at their left: they

ſtood

stood, I say, so securely, under the wing of Divine Providence, as if they had been so many Iron Pillars or Walls of Brass.

It calls to mind that passage, where the Prophet speaking of God, saith, *That he giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might, he increaseth strength, Isa.* 40. 29. To be sure, those houses had no might or strength of their own against such a Fire; had it seized them, it would have made but a blaze of them, it would have swallowed them up quick, unless the great God had interposed, as he did on behalf of the three Children in the fiery Furnace. The preservation of those houses, I reflect upon, not as if it were a Miracle, but as a very great wonder and demonstration of Divine Providence. *Mira & Miracula*, that is, *Wonders and Miracles*, are usually distinguished. Miracles put Nature out of its course; as when the Sun was made to stand still, the Red-sea dried up, &c. but I cannot say, that in this case any such thing was done. Possibly, the wind lay still, or blew another way, at what time the Fire came near those houses: but, Who was it that called the wind into his treasurie again, at that very time, or else appointed it to blow from another Coast? Was it not that Great God, who is said, to ride upon the wings of the wind, and to make the Clouds his Chariots? and for that end (as may be meet for us to conceive) that he might convince the world, that all Safety and Danger is as he pleaseth to make it, that he can expose those things which seem to be most secure, and secure those things which are most exposed: Of this we have many Instances. In the time of the last great Plague, how many persons were there infected with it, yea, and died of it, who, to all appearance, were out of harms way?

whereas others again, who lived as it were in the mouth of danger, and jaws of death (as namely in infected families, yea, some in Pest-houses) were preserved, and are alive to this very day.

When the Arrows of God flew about, some stood (not knowing how to help it) as it were at the very mark, and yet it was the pleasure of him that had the bow in his hand not to shoot them; others stood either wide of the Butt, or far beyond it, and yet a Dart struck thorow their Liver: an invenomed Arrow took hold of them, and drunk up their Spirits. So it falls out in Spiritual things. How great was *Lot*'s danger in *Sodom*? (the very air of which place seemed to be infectious, as to matter of filthiness) yet there he continued chaste, how safe would one have thought him upon the Mountains (as for any such matter); yet God leaving him there, he became incestuous with his own Daughters. The Almighty seemeth to take pleasure, yea, and to glory in doing unlikely things. The Prophet, *Isa.* 64. 3. ascribeth to *God terrible things, such as men looked not for.* Having the issues of life and death in his hands, he so ordereth it many times for his own glory, that persons notoriously weak and crazy should hold out a long siege of distempers, yea, and overcome them at last (after several years of drooping) whereas others of *Sampson*-like strength (in comparison of them) fall sick, and die within a few days; So, weak Christians (both as to grace and gifts) are many times kept unspotted of the present world, and enabled to quench all the fiery darts of Sathan, whilst some that excell them, both in gifts and graces, are sometime left of God (in order to their greater humbling) to take shamefull falls, and for a time to be overcome of the evil one: witness *David* and others. So the soft Scabbard (muchmore in danger as one would think)

oft-times

oft-times receiveth no hurt by lightning, whilst the same lightning, passing thorough it, doth melt the steel within. *Paul* observed by himself, that when he was weak, then he was strong, meaning stronger or more strengthned by God, than at other times: which words imply, that when he was strongest to his own thinking, then was he really weaker than at other times, because then he had less of the presence of God with him. All these Instances are such like things in effect, as was the preservation of old timber-houses, whilst newer Buildings of Brick or Stone that stood near to them, were presently demolished.

It refresheth me so much the more, to think, that all this came to pass, without any thing of a Miracle; because the working of *Miracles* we ought not to expect in these daves; nor can we, without presumption, and tempting of God, pray to him, to supersede, over-rule, or invert the course of Nature for our sakes; but, to seek a wonder of God when need requires, is no presumption or sin at all: and the instance before us doth make evident, that Wonders may sometime stead us as much as Miracles, even as the Houses I am speaking of, (as near to danger as they were,) were as effectually secured by God's either stilling or diverting the Wind, (in the very nick of time,) as they could have been by the working of the greatest Miracle. We think, God must over-turn the course of Nature, if he would do this, and that, for us (as he spake of *Gods making windows in heaven*): Whereas himself, who is only wise, knows how to accomplish what we desire without using such violent, extraordinary means. Be confident, the Lord knows how, together with every danger and *temptation, to make a way for escape*, and relie upon what

is

is ſpoken, *Pſal.* 91. 1. *He that dwelleth in the ſecret place of the moſt high, ſhall abide under the ſhadow of the Almighty*: and *let the Children of men put their truſt under the ſhadow of his wings.*

MEDITATION LVIII.

Upon the Warning which other Places may, and ought to take by the Burning of London.

*London*s downfall may Alarm all the World. As many bad People as were in it, let him, that can, point out that City in which there are more (ſo far as men can judg) that are truly good. If ten righteous perſons, yea, if fifty, yea, if ten times fifty, (to ſpeak within compaſs,) could have ſaved it, *London* had not been deſtroyed: There were more than a few Names within that *Sardis*, of ſuch as had not defiled their garments like others; Yet, it ſhould ſeem, not enow to weigh againſt the ſins of the reſt. Comparing *London* with other places, we may call it a Green-Tree; and, *If this were done to the green Tree, What ſhall be done to the dry? If Judgement begin at the Houſe of God, where ſhall the wicked and ungodly appear?*

I doubt not but there were ſins enow in *London* to deſerve the Judgment that did befall it, yea, and a greater than that; but, by the ſame reaſon, there is guilt enough in all other places to expoſe them to as great a deſolation. *Job* had ſins enow of his own to acquit God, in ſtripping him of all his earthly Comforts, and ſetting him upon a Dunghill to *ſcrape his ſores with pot-ſheards*; yet *Job* had not, at that time, his fellow *in all the Eaſt-Country, for a man fearing God, and eſchewing evil*: ſo that God might as juſtly have done the ſame thing to any man

man of that age, as to him. Sins, comparatively small, have sometimes been branded with great punishments; witness, *Davids numbering the People*, and *the Bethshemites looking into the Ark*; possibly to show, that little sins are commensurate with great Judgements, in point of evill, as a grain of some Poisons may be as hurtful as a dram of others; so lesser sinners do sometimes fall under heavy Judgements, to show, that even they deserve such Scorpions as those, and others, greater punishments; but that the patience of God extends to the reprieving of them for the present; as *Solomon* said to *Abiathar*, *Thou art worthy to dye; but I will not put thee to death at this time*, 1 King. 2. 26.

Such as charge those sins upon *London*, which it was never guilty of, might have had more colour for so doing, if the Judgement had not fallen upon all sorts of men, as well those whom they think free from any such guilt, as others, who were really free, though they do not think them so.

To speak of *London*, as worse than indeed it was, (that is, as worse than other places;) is no other, than to bespeak security in other places, and to prevent that warning which they ought to take, and which is indeed given them by the destruction of *London*. Who hath not reason to think, that other places shall likewise perish, if they repent not? All my doubt concerning *London*, is, whether it were better than most other places proportionably to the mercies and means of grace, which it enjoyed above them; or whether, those things considered, its sins did not preponderate: but whether absolutely considered, it did not more abound with people, of good and unblamable lives, then most other places do, I do not much question, nor can I tell who doth.

Could

Could I be heard beyond the Seas, I would say, Let *Rome*, *Vienna*, *Venice*, *Madrid*, and *Paris*, take warning by the destruction of *London*, and repent betimes, as in dust and ashes, and (to keep within our own bounds), Let *Dublin*, and *Edenborough*, do so likewise: or (to come nearer home), Let *York*, *Bristol*, *Norwich*, and all other Cities of *England* (now in being), meet the Lord in the way of his judgements, and seek to turn away his wrath, lest they drink of the same Cup of trembling, whereof *London* hath drunk so deep, lest God do unto them, as he hath done unto it (as he threatned of old to do to *Jerusalem* as unto *Shiloh Jer.* 7. 14.) lest *he rain fire and an horrible tempest upon them*, as he hath done upon that famous City; yea, lest when *London* (having humbled its self under the mighty hand of God) shall be restored and lifted up again (which we pray, and hope for) their doom should be to succeed it in the same Calamity, under which it groaneth at this day: Which thing we should all wish may be prevented as to each of them, by a Sincere and seasonable Repentance.

FINIS.

Twenty Seven MEDITATIONS

Consisting of

COUNSEL and COMFORT

TO

DIRECT and SUPPORT

CHRISTIANS

Under outward troubles: But especially calculated for the use of those, that were and are great Sufferers by the Fire.

Part IV.

By *Samuel Rolle* Minister of the Word, and sometime Fellow of Trinity Colledge in *Cambridge*.

LONDON,

Printed for *Thomas Parkhurst*, *Nathanael Ranew*, and *Jonathan Robinson*, 1667.

TO THE

RIGHT WORSHIPFULL

Sir *THOMAS ADAMS*

Knight and Baronet.

TO

Sir *FRANCIS BICKLEY*

Knight and Baronet

And to the reſt of the wothy Citizens of the now deſolate (though not deſpairing) City

OF

LONDON

Eſpecially ſuch of them, as either reſide at *Hackney*, or are Governours of Saint *Thomas's* Hoſpital in *Southwark*.

S. R.

A Native of *London*, and true Mourner for the Calamity thereof, in gratitude to ſeveral of them, and in true reſpect to all, dedicateth this moſt Conſolatory part of his Meditations, wiſhing the reparation of all their loſſes in Gods due time; and their compleat Aſſurance of an intereſt in thoſe better things that cannot be loſt.

Mixt Meditations and Discourses of Counsell and Comfort to such as were great sufferers by the firing of *London*.

DISCOURSE I.

Of Deliverance under losses and troubles, as well as out of them.

TO say there is a Deliverance under Losses and Troubles, as well as another out of them, must needs be good sense, because it is good Divinity. The holy Ghost in the Scripture speaks of such a thing, to whom it is impossible to speak either untruly or improperly. It were blasphemy and non-sense to charge him either with falshood or folly, who is Truth and Wisdom its selfe, and the fountain of all that Truth and Wisdom which is dispersed amongst all intelligent creatures. He himself tels us how Christ was heard in the prayers which he made for Deliverance, unto him that was able to save from death. *Heb.* 5. 8. Yet was he not saved from the Cross, intimating thereby, that there is a Deliverance (properly enough so called) under the cross, as well as from under it, else how was Christ heard and delivered as to the cup which

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he beg'd might pass from him? *Luke* 22. 42. Which nevertheless he was made to drink; unless his being strengthened to undergoe it, as the next verse tells us, that then there appeared an Angel, from heaven strengthening him: as also his being inabled to triumph over principalities upon the Cross (as is said *Col.* 2. 15.) might be interpreted an eminent Deliverance, vouchsafed him in and upon the Cross. I am mistaken if the Apostle *Paul* in *Rom.* 7. 25. doth not give thanks to God thorough Jesus Christ for delivering him as to the body of Death, which yet he carryed about with him, and therefore was not delivered from but under it, as the foregoing words do shew, O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of Death? And in 1 *Cor.* 10. 13. the Apostle saith, God is faithful who will with the temptation also make a way to escape (or to be delivered) that ye may be able to beat it; seeming thereby to insinuate that Deliverance and Temptation may stand together, and do so, when a man is not tempted above what he is able, but together with the temptation, hath assistance to beat it. Were not the Israelites delivered in the red Sea, *Jonas* in the great deep and Whales belly? *Daniel* in the Lions den? the three children in the fiery furnace, I say were they not first truly delivered in each of these, as afterwards from and out of them? To be kept under water from drowning and in the midst of fire, from being burnt, is Deliverance with a witness. Had the bush that did burn and was not consumed been presently quencht, or snatcht out of the fire, it had not been so eminently delivered as it was. Deliverances

under

under great troubles though least observed by many, are of all others most observable and Emphaticall: what more admirable promise than that *Isa.* 43. 2. *When thou passest thorough the rivers, they shall not overflow thee, when thou walkest thorough the fire, thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.* No place can be more pertinent than that is, to prove there is such a thing as Deliverance under trouble: the notion is worth our pursuing, because it is full of Comfort; it opens as it were a new spring of consolation to those that are under trouble which many did overlook before, as *Hagar* did those wells of water which were neatest to her. Many people have no more joy and comfort than they have hopes of having their losses repaired in kind, and their temporal troubles removed, and God knows whether that may ever be, when they themselves despair of it, their hearts faile within them, he that thinks himself utterly undone, and that it will not be worth while for him to live, if *London* be not suddenly rebuilt, trading speedily restored, when these things appear unlikely, will be at his wits ends, but he that knows and believes that God (who is onely wise) can make him and his happy, though *London* should still lye in ashes, and trade not revive in many years to come; that God can work a Deliverance for him in and under all publick calamities, and in despight of all and every of them, he I say will in patience possesse his soul. St. *Pauls* words, 1 *Cor.* 1. 4. are much to be heeded, where he saith, *Blessed be God who comforteth us in all our Tribulations*; he doth not say who delivereth us out of all, but

who comforteth us in all our Tribulations, and what is that but a Deliverance under trouble, when God doth comfort us in it? If there be such a thing as Deliverance under trouble, many may and will rejoyce in the hopes of that, who are past all hope (though I think that should not be neither) of ever seeing an end of their present troubles. They look upon Deliverance out of the present calamities to be at so great a distance, that they think the steed will starve whilst the grass grows, and their carkasses will fall in the wilderness, ere the time come for entring into *Canaan*. But now by virtue of the notion I am speaking of, though I should grant men of misgiving minds, there are as great unlikelyhoods as they can suppose, that they should ever re-enjoy, such houses trades, estates, conveniencies, as formerly, or any thing comparable thereunto, yet may they live in a dayly expectation of a comfortable Deliverance, with and under those calamities, which are like to continue upon them; that God together with their temptations, will make a way for their escape, men so perswaded will be able to say with *Habakkuk*, though the fig-tree blossome nor, and the labour of the *Olive* faile, yet will (or may they) rejoyce in the Lord, and joy in the God of their Salvation. When *Paul* prayed that the Messenger of *Sathan*, which buffetted him might depart, God gave him no assurance of that, at least-wise for the present, but yet told him that which satisfied him, though that evil messenger were likely to continue, namely, that his Grace should be sufficient for him. The Israelites knew that their captivity

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in *Babylon* would certainly last seventy years. Therefore it was not the hopes of a speedy Deliverance from thence, that did bear up the hearts of believers amongst them, but the hopes they had, that God would be good to them, in and under their captivity, and show them mercy in a strange land. If the *Israelites* knew, as it is like they did, that they must wander no lesse than forty years in the wilderness, ere they came to *Canaan*, it was the Mercy and Deliverance which they did expect in the wilderness, not out of it, during all that time, that did support them; as hoping that in that howling desert, God would be no wilderness or Land of Darkness to them. If God spread a table for his people in the wilderness, if he give them water out of the Rock, and Manna from heaven, are not those things to be reckoned Deliverances (namely from the evils that in such a place, they might expect) though Quailes should be with-held? Though the famine were not removed, yet seeing *Elijah* was fed the mean time, though but by *Ravens*, it must be acknowledged, that he was delivered in and under famine. If to the righteous there arise light in darkness, as is promised there shall, is not that Deliverance? Though *Paul* and *Silas* were in prison, and their feet in the stocks, yet if they were so cheatful there, as to sing praises to God at midnight, *Acts* 16. 25. was not that a great Deliverance? Surely *Paul* and others of whom he speakes, were greatly delivered, even under chastisement, sorrow, poverty, and a kind of Death, yea Deaths often, or else he could ever say as he doth, 2 *Cor.* 6. 9. 10. *As dying*

and behold we live, as sorrowfull, yet alwaies rejoicing, as poor, yet making many rich, as having nothing, yet possessing all things; as if he had but the shadowes of evill, but the reality and substance of good things. He is delivered from death, as to whom the sting of death is taken away, and he from the noisome pestilence who is secured, that the evill of it shall not come nigh him (which is all that seems intended by that promise *Psal* 91. 3. verse, compared with the tenth) *David* somewhere prayes that God would bring his Soul out of trouble, and his Soul out of prison. The Soul of a man is the man, if that be brought out of trouble, in whole, or in part, though his body, his name, estate, relations are yet in trouble, the man himself is delivered. A man may be sick and well at the same time (as *Paul* was poor, and yet rich at the same time) according to that of the Prophet, the inhabitants shall not say they are sick, for their sins shall be forgiven them; a man can be but well in Prosperity, and it may be as well with us, yea and better with us in adversity, all things considered (as *David* saith, it was good for him that he was afflicted) and in that case is not a man truly delivered even under affliction? It may be God will be more with us in the water and in the fire, than ever he was out of it. As prospective-glasses do represent the object near at hand, though it be some miles distant, so may this notion represent Deliverance at the very door, or as that which may come the next morning, when sorrow came but the evening before (*viz.* Deliverance in and under trouble, which may be sufficient for us) though Deliverance

rance out of trouble, may seem as far from us as the *East* is from the *West*, thus may we hope in one kind whilst we despair in another, and with *Abraham* (in hope) believe even against hope. If outward calamity and misery might not consist with more real happiness and comfort, than plenty and prosperity had wont to afford, how could that promise of Christ be fulfilled, that they who forsake all for him, shal have a hundred-fold in this life, and yet with persecution, or in despight thereof? Lord if my heart deceive me not, I had rather partake of those Deliverances which many of thy servants have had, with and under great and sore trouble, than of those Deliverances out of trouble into greatest earthly prosperity, which thou hast sometimes vouchsafed to wicked men. Thou who gavest to *Paul* and *Silas*, imprisoned and in the stocks, songs in the night, but didst make *Belteshazzar* tremble, and his knees smite together in the midst of his ful cups and jovial company, thou canst imbitter the best of earthly conditions, and sweeten the worst. Lord give me rather a bitter cup of thy sweetning, than a sweet cup of thy imbittering. As for all the troubles which at this day are upon my self, or any of thy people; if thou wilt never deliver us out of them, thy will be done, but oh faile not in such manner as hath been spoken (and how else thou pleasest) to save and deliver us under them, that experience henceforth, may render it no paradox to me and others, that there is real Deliverance under trouble, as well as out of it, that the snare of evil may not be visibly broken, and yet thy people may be delivered.

DISCOURSE II.

Of this, that the life of man consists not in the abundance of what he possesseth.

SUrely it is from a vain conceit, that the life of man consists in his abundance, that those who have not an abundance of earthly comforts, do so much covet after it; and those that have, do so much blesse themselves in it, as some are brought in saying, *Zach.* 11. 5. *Blessed be the Lord, for I am rich;* & those who have lost of their abundance do mourn so inordinately for the want of it. But whatsoever men think, Christ assures us it is not so, *Luke* 12. 15. For there saith he, *the life of a man consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.* I think at present of six or of seven instances wherein that saying of Christ is verified. First, The length or prolongation of mans life, doth not consist in the abundance of what he possesseth. The oyle of riches cannot feed the lampe of life, *Psal.* 49. from the 6. to the 11. verse. *They that boast themselves of their riches, none of them can redeem his brother, or give to God a ransome for him, that he should still live for ever, and not see corruption, for he seeth that wise men dye, and leave their wealth to others.* Look abroad and you will see more poor men that have lived to a great age than rich, (yea in proportion to the number, there is of one and of the others) Some diseases which poor people generally escape out of, and make but light of them, how often do they prove fatal and deadly to them that are rich? as if corruption were ambi-

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tious to claime kindred of them, more than of others, and the hungry wormes to feed upon their well fed flesh, rather than that of others: to allude to *Job* 17. 14. *I have said to corruption, thou art my father, to the worme, thou art my mother, and my sister*: poor men lengthen their lives by labour, & rich men too too often shorten theirs by Luxury. Neither doth the end of mans life consist in possessing an abundance; man was not sent into the world, to load himselfe with thick clay, or to adde house to house, and land to land, as if he meant to dwell alone upon the earth, to possesse himselfe of so many hundreds, or thousands by the year, and so leave it to his posterity. That these are trifles to the great end which man was sent into the world for, appeareth by *Acts* 17. 27. where *Paul* tels us, that God hath set man upon the face of the earth, to seek after God (there is the end of life) if happily he might find him out. Nor in the third place, doth the Credit of a mans life consist in the meere abundance of the things which he possesseth; they that have nothing to commend them but their riches, though they are flattered by many, are truly honoured but by a few, most men will bow downe to those idols of Silver and of God, as I may cal them (because it is the fashion so to doe) but when their backs are turned upon them, they are ready to say of them, as the Apostle concerning idols in the general, 1 *Cor.* 8. 4. we know that an Idol is nothing in the world, we know such a one for all his brave outsides, and the caps and knees that are given him to be a worthlesse person; and to signifie just nothing.

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He is like a rich tomb without, which is so ill furnished within, that it is not worth opening. Fourthly, Neither doth the usefulnesse of mans life, consist in the abundance of what he possesseth. *Solomon* tels of a poor man that by his wisdome delivered a City, *Eccles.* 9. 15. That a rich man void of wisdom, could not have done with all his wealth; some do more good in the world with a little, than others doe that have great estates. There are little figures in the world, and great Ciphers, great ones that spend all they can rap and rend together, upon their lusts, and no body is the better for it; and others of meane condition, that are content to spend, and to be spent for publick good. Some great trees do but shade and prevent the growth of other plants, and meane time bear no fruit themselves. Fifthly, Neither doth the successefulnesse of mans life, and of the undertakings thereof depend wholly upon the abundance of what he possesseth. Now many elder brothers that have had great estates left them by their Parents, great portions with their Wives, and have in a few years, by Drunkennesse, Gaming, Whoreing, one or all of these, reduced themselves and their families to a morsell of Bread, selling their birth right as it were, for a Messe of Porrage. And on the other hand, how many younger brothers that have been bound to honest trades, and had no more from their parents, than a competent stock to set up with, have with the blessing of God, upon their industry, arrived at great estates? How many have set up with smal stocks, (it may be with nothing else but a stock of Credit)

and

and in a few years, become very rich? and on the other hand, how many have had great ſtocks to begin with, and have ſoon brought them to nothing? Sixthly, Neither doth the life of men in, and as to their children (in whom parents are ſaid to live) conſiſt in, or depend upon the abundance of what they poſſeſſe, or of what they have to give them; how many fathers have given great portions with their children, thinking to match them highly, and in a few years (yea months ſometimes) have ſeen both their money and their children caſt away? Others againe have had little wherewith to prefer their children in marriage, and yet have ſeen them as well diſpoſed of, as if they could have given them thouſands. Neither are good and comfortable yokefellows, the onely things that men are not ſure always to purchaſe, for their children by giving great eſtates with them, but many other things there are that parents wiſh to ſee in their children, as namely, Health, Strength, Freedome from Deformity, Wiſdome, Grace, which things if they be wanting, cannot be bought for them with all the Gold that is in both the *Indies*, neither can parents comfortably live or injoy themſelves in their children, if all or moſt of thoſe things be wanting. Laſtly, the happineſſe and comfort of mans life, (which I take to be that which Chriſt here chiefly intends by the life of man) doth certainly not conſiſt in the abundance of what he poſſeſſeth; it is one thing to poſſeſſe, and another thing to injoy, he may injoy more that poſſeſſeth leſſe. Hear *David*, *Pſal.* 37. 16. *A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked.* Some men

men have more comfort in a dish of green herbs, than others can find in a stalled Oxe, *Zophar* speaking of a wicked man, *Job* 20. 22. saith, *that in the fulnesse of his sufficiency, he shall be in straits*, and why may not good men in the midst of their straits, have a kind of sufficiency? the Scripture telling us, that a good man is satisfied from himself. I doubt not but some, and those the very same persons, have had more contentment in, or injoyment of God, and of themselves in a lower and poorer, than ever they had in a higher and more plentiful condition, which hath reconciled them to the literal interpretation of these words, *James* 1. 10. *Let the rich* (which may be understood of him that was rich) *rejoyce in that he is made low*. Most men count it easier, when they are once down, to sit low, than to sit high. The body may be too full of blood to consist with health, as well as too empty, though that blood be all good. There is a *Plethora* or *Redundancy* of good blood, as well as a *Catochymia* or *Superfluity* of bad humours, which makes men lesse chearful, than they would otherwise be; so that breathing a veine may give some reliefe against Melancholly. Wise Mariners having cast away some of their lading in a tempest, do with more hearts-ease and security injoy the rest; so fareth it with some men, after considerable losses, they are better satisfied with a part, than they were before with the whole. I see then experience doth abundantly confirme what Christ hath spoken, touching the life of man not consisting in the abundance of that he possesseth. I must then take leave to think, those men are sick-

ſick-brained that think, no man can be happy unleſſe he have ſo many hundreds, yea thouſands by the year. Let a man make me believe if he can, that no man can make a pleaſant meale under twenty or thirty diſhes, when I know a man may feed as delightfully upon two or three, yea it may be upon one. Perſwade us who can that no man can travel a few miles to his ful content without a Coach and ſix Horſes: or that a man cannot ſleepe ſweetly any where but upon a bed of down hung with velvet curtaines, when we all know the contrary. I like our proverb well, Enough is as good as a feaſt; (yea ordinarily it is better) I doubt not but Diſcontent is as often clad in Silks and Sattins as in leather doublets and canvais breeches; many times eaſier feet goe in plainer ſhooes; give me rather high ſhooes ſuch as Plow-men wear, with ſound toes in them, than high great gouty toes, in velvet ſlippers; let me rather tread in the dirt, where I can ſtand faſt, than walk upon ſmooth ice, where I ſhall alwaies be in fear of falling; if then abundance of earthly things can neither prolong my daies, nor give me the true end of life, nor help me to that good name which is indeed a preci ous ointment, nor aſſure me of ſucceſſe, nor make me to be more uſeful, nor make my children more happie than with the bleſſing of God they may be without it, nor finally afford me more comfort and contentment in my life, than others have, who have no abundance, if God hath diminiſhed my abundance, I have no reaſon to mourne as one without hope, or as *Micah* did, when his idol Gods were taken from him, as if he had been

quite

quite undone. If God so please, I may in this impaired condition, be as happie, yea more than ever I was. In thy favour O Lord is life, yea thy favour is better than life its selfe, *Psal.* 30. 5. *Ps.* 63. 3. *Lift thou up upon us the light of thy countenance, and it shall make my heart more glad, than they whose Corne and Oyle increase.* Let me be so far from thinking I shall never see good daie more, because I have lost a part, yea it may be the greatest part of what I sometimes had, as nevertheless to hope, that my last daies though much the poorest, may be my verie best.

DISCOURSE III.

Of the Lessons of an afflicted estate well learnt, their making way for prosperity to insue.

THe best waie to gaine, or regaine prosperitie, is to learne apace in the schoole of Adversitie. Affliction is a teaching thing, for we read of Christ himselfe that he did learne obedience by the things he suffered, *Heb.* 5. 8. As the Law is said to bea School-master to bring us to Christ, so is misery a School-master to bring us to happiness, in case we give our selves to be taught by it. As parents will keep their children at schoole no longer when once they are fit for the Universitie, but send them thither; so will God translate his people to the *Academy* of a more pleasing condition, when they are dulie ripened and prepared for it by the schoole of adversitie; witnesse these words of the Psalmist, *Psal.* 94. 12. 13. *Blessed is the man whom thou*

thou chastenest O Lord, and teachest him out of thy Law, that thou mayest give him rest from the dayes of Adversity. Affliction is Gods plow, with which he breaketh up the fallow ground of mens hearts, and when that is done, he is most ready to sow the seedes of peace and comfort, as it is written, light is sowne for the righteous, and joy for the upright in heart. Now sowing presupposeth plowing, nor would the husbandman doe the former *viz.* to plow, but that he intends the latter, *viz.* to cast in his seed, and would thereby prepare for it. Now there are several Lessons which God doth or would teach men by his speaking rod in affliction, if men doe or would hear the voice of that rod, and him that hath appointed it. First, God by affliction would teach men to praie. Is any man afflicted, let him praie, *Ja.*5. Affliction quickens men unto praier. As *Absolom* fetcht *Joab* to him by setting his corne on fire: in their affliction they will seek me earlie, saith God; yea and it also quickens men in praier, Christ in his Agonie prayed yet more ferventlie. Christ offered up prayers with strong crying and tears to him that was able to save him from death: intimating that the approach of death did help to quicken him, *Heb.* 5.7. It is a Proverb, *he that cannot pray, send him to Sea*, affliction is a dangerous Sea, and God sends many men thither, that they may learne how to pray. After *Paul* was struck down to the earth, and terrifyed with a voice from heaven we quicklie hear of him: Behold he prayeth! *Acts* 16. 11. so he had wont to doe in former times, for that he was a Pharisee, but now he so prayed and to so good purpose

purpose as he never did before. And is not prayer (such as it may be) a good means to get out of affliction? is it not said, call upon me in the day of affliction, and I will deliver thee? *Psal.* 50. 15. and in *Psal.* 107. 17. 19. We read, *Fools because of their Transgressions are afflicted, then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, he saveth them out of their Distresses*, also verse 13. If our affliction do not cause us to restraine prayer from the Almighty (like him that said, this evill is of the Lord, why should I wait on him any longer?) our prayers will prevaile with God, to restraine affliction in his due time and manner. Secondly, Another Lesson which affliction teacheth us (or rather God by it) is to walk humbly, and to be humble, I am sure is the ready way to be exalted. In *Deut.* 8. 2. We read how God lead the Israelites 40. years in the wilderness to humble them, implying that a wilderness condition, tends to humble men. Earthly good things are the fuel of pride and therefore pride of life is spoken of as if it were a third part of all the things that are in the world, 1 *John* 2. 16. *All that is in the world is, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life*, that is fuel to these; now when the fuel is abated, it may be expected that the fire will slake. And will not humility make way for our Deliverance? Surely it will, witnesse that promise, *Lev.* 26. 41, 42. *If then their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and I will remember the land.* If God humble us, he wil doe us good in our latter end, *Deut.* 8. 2. See the promise *James* 4. 10. *humble your selves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.* Doth not God by his Prophet tell us,

Isaiah

Isa. 57. 15. *That he dwelleth with the humble, & contrite, to revive them?* Thus you see affliction doth as it were, prepare Antidotes to expell its self: as some of our best Antidotes, for expulsion of poyson, are taken from the bodies of poysonous creatures; as Serpents, Vipers. And affliction sanctified, works humility, and humility exercised, works out affliction. Thirdly, A third Lesson, which God by affliction, teacheth man, is to be patient, and to submit to his divine will. And this also will be found an excellent means to remove affliction, and recover prosperity in due time. We read *Rom.* 5. 3. *How that Tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience that hope which maketh not ashamed.* Now that which produceth an unflattering hope, doth surely contribute to deliverance, both as it is a kind of cause, in which hope foreseeth such an issue as deliverance is, as also, for that hope is as it were deliverance anticipated, for we are saved by hope, saith the text, *Rom.* 8. 24. But more plainly, *James* 5. 11. *Ye have heard of the patience of Job,* saith he, *and have seen the end of the Lord.* Job was patient, and God afterwards gave him double in lieu of what he had taken from him, it is good that a man should quietly wait for the Salvation of the Lord, *Jam.* 3. 26. and verse 25. *The Lord is good to them that wait for him.* God sometimes hath all his end in afflicting, when he hath but made us humbly to stoop and submit, *Levit.* 26. 41. *If then they shall accept the punishment of their iniquity,* that is, if they did patiently bear the indignation of the Lord, as having sinned against him, and submit to the rod, then God promiseth that he would remember their

land, &c. it is Gods manner to withdraw afflictions, when he hath once accomplished the end for which he sent them. *Esa.* 10.12. God saith, that when he had performed his whole work upon Mount *Zion* and *Jerusalem*, then would he punish the fruit of the stout heart of the King of *Assyria*, who was their oppressor. If then the design of God in afflicting, be only to make us submit to his will (as sometimes it is) when we have learnt to do that (like *Abraham* that was become willing to sacrifice his *Isaac*, which was all God intended to put him to) then is deliverance in one kind or other not far off. God doth not intend to make some men always poor, and despicable, though they are so for the present, but yet the copy of his countenance towards them, is as if he meant they should always be in adversity, whereas all he stands upon, is to make them contented so to be, if such be his will concerning them; and when they have quietly laid themselves down at Gods feet, bound their *Isaac* to the altar with a true intent to sacrifice him to the good pleasure of God, and stretch forth their hand to do it, then comes as it were a voice from heaven saying, let it alone, it is enough that thou hast done already; behold I will accept a *Ram* for a burnt offering, instead of thy son, as God dealt with *Abraham*, *Gen.* 22.13. God doth many things but to try us and make us believe he will take all from us (when he means only to wean us from all) that he may say of us, as of *Abraham*, *Gen.* 22.12. *Now I know thou fearest God, for thou hast not withheld thy Son, thy only Son from me.* To be content always, to be in trouble, if God will have it so, is the way

way to come out, is one good way to escape: Fourthly, Affliction teacheth us to live under an awful sense of God. It is a Schoole of fear as to God, *Psal.* 119. 120. *My flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgements,* (saith *David* to God.) If God appear as a consuming fire, one maine use we are to make of it is, to serve him with Godly fear; *Heb.* 12. Now it is evident, that a due fear of God doth make way for Deliverance out of trouble: When God saw that *Abraham* was so fearful to offend him, that he durst not withhold his son *Isaac* whom God had commanded him to sacrifice with his own hands, he gave him *Isaac* again, and accepted a *Ram* in his stead, *Gen.* 22. 12. When God had brought *Manasseh* to know that the Lord was God, that is, to fear and reverence God as became him, and to humble himself before him, then saith the text, *the Lord heard his supplication and brought him again to Jerusalem, into his Kingdome*, 2 *Chron.* 33. 13. Fifthly, Affliction is a Schoole of obedience and circumspect walking, *Eph.* 5. 15, 16. *See then that yee walk circumspectly, because the dayes are evil.* Those that walke in the dark take more than ordinary care lest they stumble, and fall, now dayes of evill or affliction, are called dayes of darkenesse. Prosperity hath hardly more Temptations on one hand; than great affliction hath on the other hand: hence *Agur* deprecates poverty, *Prov.* 30. 9. *Lest I be poor and Steale, and take the name of the Lord in vaine.* The Apostle was afraid lest the incestuous *Corinthian*, if not timely comforted, might be swallowed up of two much sorrow, 2. *Cor.* 2. 7.

and leſt *Sathan* ſhould get an advantage againſt him, verſe 11. affliction is a tempeſt, and therefore we muſt do like Pilots, who ſteer with greateſt circumſpection in a ſtorm, the hard froſt of adverſity, though it be apt to kill certain weeds, as pride, ſecurity, and ſuch like? yet if care be not taken, it may alſo nip many hopefull bloſſomes (as unſeaſonable froſts uſe to do.) If ſuch eminent worthyes as *Elijah*, *Job*, *Jonas*, *Jeremy*, were between whiles worſe for thoſe afflictions, which ſhould have made them better, (as we know they were) we had need look to our ſelves, and walk circumſpectly at ſuch a time. Now that our ſo doing will make way for our deliverance. *David* tels us, *Pſal.* 50. 23. *To him that ordereth his converſation aright, will I ſhew the Salvation of God.* And the Prophet, *Iſa.* 59. 20. *The Redeemer ſhall come to Zion, and unto them that turne from tranſgreſſion in Jacob.* Sixthly, Another Leſſon which affliction teacheth men, is to redeem time, *Eph.* 5. 16. *Redeeming the time becauſe the dayes are evill.* Young Scholars are not more ordinarily whipt for any thing, than for loſing their time, and in order to making them ſpend their time better. We have never leſſe time to loſe than when the rod of the Almighty is upon our backs. Affliction makes work whereſoever it comes (as Sickneſſe in a Family uſeth to do) and time is then moſt precious, when we have moſt work upon our hands, when we have moſt to do; yea it alſo indiſpoſeth for work, and when the iron is blunt, we had need put to the more ſtrength. Travellers make the beſt of their time in the depth of winter, and will hardly

draw

draw bit till night, becauſe the ſhortneſſe of the dayes, and badneſſe both of the wayes and weather are great hindrances. When we look for the greateſt impediments, we had need take the moſt time before us; neither is the Redeeming of time more a duty in Affliction, than a direct means to get out of it. Take one inſtance for all in *Paul* and *Silas*, who being in priſon, were redeeming their midnight time from reſt and ſleepe, for ſinging and praiſing of God, *Acts* 16. And the next news we have of them is, they were both miraculouſly ſet at liberty. Laſtly, Affliction is a Schoole of Faith and Affiance in God. *David*, ſaith *Pſal.* 63. 3. At what time he was afraid he would put his truſt in God, and when he was overwhelmed, he would fly to the rock that was higher than he, meaning to God; and upon the wing of faith. And it is ſaid that ſhe who is a widdow indeed truſteth in God, and why ſhe that is a widdow, rather than ſhe who is a wife, but becauſe the condition of a widdow, is ordinarily more afflicted and diſconſolate: Moreover Afflictions are called the tryal of our Faith. All which paſſages prove that affliction is a Schoole of Faith as well as of patience. Now withall it is famouſly known, that the exerciſe of Faith, and dependance upon God, is a notable expedient for the removal of Affliction. What miracles of Deliverance are attributed to *Faith*, *Heb.* 11. 33. By Faith they ſtopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, eſcaped the edge of the ſword, turned to flight the armies of the aliens: and paſſed the red Sea, as upon dry land; which the *Egyptians* eſſaying to doe

were drown'd, vet.29. And if you will have it from the mouths of two witneſſes, let that of the *Pſalmiſt* be added *Pſal.* 22.4. Our *fathers truſted in thee, and thou didſt deliver them, they truſted in thee and were not confounded.* Thus have I mentioned ſeven doors belonging to the valley of *Acor* (which ſignifies trouble) or ſo many wayes of eſcape out of Affliction, which are alſo dutyes in and under it. I ſee then in this caſe there are two gaps may be ſtopt with one hedge (a man may *una fideli duos dealbare parietes*) there are two intentions may be anſwered with one and the ſame medicine; two queſtions may be equally ſatisfied with one and the ſame anſwer; namely theſe two, how ought I to carry my ſelfe under Affliction? and what courſe ſhould I take to get out of Affliction? He that ſtudieth the latter onely, ſhall be able to do neither, he that minds the former well, ſhall doe both under one. He that conſiders onely how to get out of Affliction, troubles himſelfe with Gods work, and neglects his own, and neither can he himſelfe do what he aimes at, nor juſtly expect that God ſhould doe it for him. But he that makes it his onely buſineſſe to carry himſelfe under Affliction, as he ought; doth what he can, and intereſſeth God to do that which himſelf cannot doe, let us doe our part, and God will not faile to doe his, and ſo both will be done.

We need not trouble our ſelves, about getting into another form, let us but out-learn others that are in the ſame form (*viz.* of Affliction) with us, or at leaſt-wiſe keep pace with the beſt of them, and our maſter which is in heaven, will take

take care of our translation into another forme, that is more to be desired, when we shall be fit for it. I find God very angry with those Jews that would think of nothing but comming out of captivity, so soon almost as they were gone into it, and would hearken to any lying Prophets that would sooth them up with such pleasing stories; whereas their duty was to bring their spirits to be content with a captivity of seventy years long, to learne the law of such a condition as that, and to comply with it, see *Jer.* 27. 8. *And it shall come to pass that the Nation and Kingdom, which will not put their neck under the yoke of* Nebuchadnezzar, *that Nation will I punish with the Sword, and Famine, and Pestilence, till I have consum'd them by his hand.* And verse 17. *Hearken not to them* (namely *who said, that the vessels of the Lords house should shortly be brought again from Babylon.* verse 16. *for they prophesie a lye to you*) *serve the King of Babylon and live,* as if he had said, Buckle your selves to the duty of your captive estate, patiently beare the yoke which God hath put about your necks, and it shall be better for you both at the present, and for the future. Apprentices that cast off the yoke before they have served out their time, doe many of them never come to be free-men, whilst they live. *Hananiah* his diverting the Jewes, from the duties incumbent upon them as designed for a long captivity, by telling them that within two years, God would bring again the captives of *Judah*, *Jer.* 28. 4. I say his so doing cost him his life, verse 16. *Thus saith the Lord, this year thou shalt dye, &c.* I cannot but observe how God commanded the Jews to provide

for a lasting captivity, *Jer.* 28.4. *Thus saith the Lord, to those whom I have caused to be carryed away from Jerusalem to Babylon, build yee houses and dwell in them, and plant Gardens and eat the fruit of them: Take ye wives and beget sons and daughters. And seek the peace of the City whether I have caused you to be carryed captives, and pray to the Lord for it, &c.* As if he had said, expect not to come out from thence suddenly, but make the best of that condition I have allotted for you, and carry your selves under it as becomes you, be satisfied and content with it, and quietly wait till my time shall come, even the set time for your Deliverance. I can do no lesse than turn the advice, I have given to my selfe and others, into such petitions as follow; Lord thou hast greatly Afflicted us, teach us thereby so to call upon thee, in this day of our trouble, that thou mayst in due time deliver us. Humble us under thy mighty hand, that thou mayest lift us up, give us so to submit to thee, and accept our punishment, that thou mayst remember our land. Give us such patience as thou gavest to thy servant *Job*, that thou mayst make such an issue for us, as thou didst for him. Cause us to fear thy great name, that when we pour out our cryes to thee, who canst deliver from death, as Christ did in the dayes of his flesh; we may be heard as he was, in that he feared. Cause us to order our conversations aright, that thou mayest shew us thy Salvation. Give us to redeem time in an evil day, as *Paul* and *Silas* did, that thou by thine outstretched arm, mayst rescue us as thou didst them, knocking off the chaines and fetters of our present troubles: And above

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all things cause us to abound in faith, as *our fathers trusted in thee, and were delivered; they trusted in thee, and were not confounded.* We desire to say with the three children, *The God whom we serve is able to deliver us, even out of a fiery furnace which hath been prepared for us*; but whither he will or no, we will trust in him; Whilst thou chastenest us, O teach us out of thy Law, and we shall not need to doubt but thou at length wilt give us rest from the daies of adversity.

DISCOURSE IV.

Of being content with Food and Rayment.

HOw many would be wel satisfied with what the Fire hath left them, if they could but take that excellent counsel which the Apostle gives them, 1 *Tim.* 6. 8. *Having food and rayment, let us be therewith content.* Statelie Houses, noble shops, full Trades, vast Incomes, some have not now as formerlie, who yet have food and rayment for them and theirs. Did *Jacob* indent with God for any more? *Gen.* 28. 20. *If God will give me bread to eat, and rayment to put on, then shall the Lord be my God.* Did *Agur* ask any more of God, (as for the things of this world,) when he said, *Feed me with food convenient?* Yea, did he not deprecate that which was much more, when he said *Give me not riches, lest, &c.* Dare we absolutely pray for more than daily bread, (and other things as necessarie for life, whereof rayment is one?) and shall we peremptorilie desire more than we dare to pray for? Can those desires be regular; which we fear to make the mat-

matter of our prayers? Or, if God vouchsafe us as much as we think lawful and fit to pray for, why should we not be content? Turn your desires of greater things than these, into the form of a prayer, and hear how it will sound: Lord give me riches, though *Agur* were so unwise as to pray against them. Lord give me with *Dives* to be cloathed with Purple and fine Linnen, and to fare sumptuously every day; or to have wherewithall so to do. Lord give me so many hundreds by the Year, more than I need to spend. Lord give me one thousand pound at least; but rather two or three for every childe; I cannot be content with less as a portion for each of them. Offer if you dare to put such Incense as this into Christ his Golden Censor; Appear if you dare with such requests as these at the Throne of grace; Expect if you can that as to such requests Jesus Christ should intercede for you. So absurd prayers cannot be good desires; nor can it be otherwise than absurd to be discontented for the want of those things which were absurd to pray for. How many of our betters have barelie food and rayment, and yet are very thankful for what they have? The *Israelites* in the Wilderness had but bread and water, when for their murmuring they were destroyed of the destroyer, 1 *Cor.* 10. Beware of grumbling at Manna, and lusting after Quailes, lest for so doing your carcasses fall in the Wilderness, as theirs did. If the end of life were to eat and drink, it were another matter; but if the end of eating and drinking be, that we may live, such food as will keep us alive and in health, ought to be accepted

cepted with thankfulneſs: what a feaſt would a belly-full of bread be counted in a time of famine. How precious was an Aſſes head, yea a cab of Doves dung in the famine of *Samaria*, 2 *Kings* 6. 28. Are we better than *Lazarus* who would have been glad of *Dives* his crums?

If that were a parable, then *Lazarus* is there put not for one perſon, but for every one, that is, ſuch as he is deſcribed to have been: namely deſigned for *Abraham*'s boſome, and yet glad of crums in this World. Let me here diet with *Lazarus*, (if the will of God be ſo) may I but be ſure hence-forth to lodge with him in the boſome of *Abraham*. Do we make light of food and raiment for us and ours? alas, what more can this World afford us, though we have ever ſo much of it? *Solomon* complaining how the hearts of men are taken up with thoughts and cares of worldly things (which is conceived to be the meaning of that difficult expreſſion, *Eccleſ.* 3. 11. *He hath ſet the World in their hearts,*) ſhowes what the benefit of the World, and of the things therein is. *I know* (ſaith he) *that there is no good in them, but for a man to rejoyce, and to do good in his life: And alſo that every man ſhould eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labour*, v. 12, 13. I finde the rich man ſpoken of *Luk.* 16. 19. diſtinguiſhed from the beggar only by this, that he ate better meat, and wore better cloaths. For the Text ſaith, *That he was clothed in Purple, and fared ſumptuouſly every day.*

Now what great matter is it, that our vile bodies ſhould have every thing of the beſt? What are our bodies, eſpecially if too much pamper'd; but as ſo many reeking dunghils, annoying our ſouls

ſoules with ill ſteames and vapours? or like dead carcaſſes joyned to living men, (a torture invented by *Mezentius*) which are an unſufferable offence to them. As it is ſaid of *Eve*, that ſhe was firſt in the tranſgreſſion; and as ſhe drew in her husband, ſo our bodies many times, like ſo much tinder do receive the firſt ſparks of temptation: or like the thatch of an houſe, are firſt kindled, and as that might ſet the whole houſe, ſo do they the whole ſoul on fire. Many ſins begin at the body, are occaſioned or fomented, or both, by the over-ſanguine, or melancholy, or cholerick temper or diſtemper thereof: which ſhewes we are no debtors to the fleſh, to fulfill the deſires thereof. Moreover if we conſider whence our bodies came, and whither they are going, it will appear there is no ſuch cauſe to be greatly concerned for them; that they ſhould wear the fineſt wool, and eat the fineſt of the wheat. Duſt they were, and to duſt they ſhall return. Why muſt they needs be fed ſo daintily, which themſelves muſt ſhortly become food for wormes? when we feed our bodies too high, what do we but feed our luſts, yea, feed diſeaſes in our very bodies? ſo that it is become a proverb, that the *Engliſh* man digs his grave with his teeth. Few kill their bodies by mortifying them: but many by indulging them. *Chriſtmas* kills many more than *Lent*. As the Ape is ſaid to hug her young ones to death: ſo many kill their bodies with too much kindneſs to them. As over-pamper'd Horſes oft times throw their riders, and give them their deaths wound: ſo are men too commonly thrown both in o ſickneſs, ſin, and death it ſelf, by indulging their bodies

bodies over much. The body (as one saith well) ought to be kept, as not *infra*, so neither *supra negotium*; *sed per negotio*; not too high for its work, but equal to it. *Paul* saith, that he did *keep under his body, and brought it into subjection.* So far was he from cockring of it till it became his master, as too many do. There is no small danger in over-exalting our blood and natural spirits.

Job was never more afraid of his children, than when they went a feasting from house to house. Then did he offer a Sacrifice for each of them, least they should blaspheme God, or had done it. A cheap and simple diet may preserve health and strength as well as the best dainties and costliest varieties. *Daniel*, and the *three children* who lived of pulse and water, were fairer and fatter than all those which did eat the portion of the Kings meat. *Dan.* 1. 15. They are sometimes the leanest cattel which devoure the fat. As for any service of God or men, he shall be much more fit, who having no pallatable diet, eats but for necessitie, and to satisfie his hunger; than one that by the deliciousnes of his fare, is tempted to devoure more than he can well digest. As for delight in meats and drinks: he that brings but hunger and thirst enough to a course meale, shall have more of that (and those are sauces which the poor have usuallie most of) than he that with halfe an appetite sits down to a great Feast. Why then, having a competencie of wholsome food, though but mean and ordinarie, should we not be therewithall content? Are we better then *John the Baptist*, of whom it is said, that his diet was Locusts and wilde Honey?

ney? Some have found more sweetnes in a draught of cold water (such as their thirst had been) than in all the Wines and Spirits which they have drank at other times? Why then may not a mean diet content us, yea prove delicious to us; as *Salomon* saith, To the hungry soule every bitter thing is sweet. Povertie brings such sawce with it, as will make a dish of Tripe more savorie than a Venison Pastie is to a rich man.

Then, as for Rayment: if we have but that which may serve the turn to keep us warm and decent, though it be course and plain: why should we not be content therewith? We read in *Mark* 1.6. *John was cloathed in Camels-hair, and with a girdle of a skin about his loins* (which was as mean as could be) & do we not read of some of the primitive Christians, that *they wandred about in sheepe-skins, and Goat-skins, Heb.* 11.37. Are we better than they? would such habits become us worse than them? Time was, that God did the *Israelites to put off their ornaments, that he might know what to do with them. Exod.*33.5. Did God ever speak, as if he knew not what to do with a people for want of ornaments? Did he ever seem displeased that a people were not fine enough? Why should that habit displease us, that God may best like us in, and know what to doe with us? Whilst we are clad with costly attire, it is hard for us at the same time to be cloathed with humilitie: yea, not to have pride compass us as a chain.

Why should not mean houses satisfie us, if God in such will appoint the bounds of our habitation? If the primitive Christians were con-

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rent with *mountains, dens, and caves of the earth*, as we read, *Heb.* 11. 37. why should we repine at mean dwellings, which yet may answer the main ends for which houses are built; *viz.* warmth, privacie, defence, and such like? were dens and caves better than such houses? or is it because we think our selves better than those that dwelt in dens and caves? Surely neither. It is but a little while that we and ours shall have need of any such things, as houses, food, and rayment; and may not that which is but mean and ordinarie content us for a while? Did not Citizens make shift with any thing whilst the Citie was burning? Glad they were to crowd their goods, their children, yea themselves into any hole where they could get, and thankful to those that would receive them, and well content with it, as thinking with themselves it was but for a while. Well, after a little while thou that camest naked into the world shalt go naked out of it, and never use such clothing more: and whereas meats are for the belly, God shall destroy both them and it.

For the present then, be content with such things as you have: as travellers use to make shift with any thing upon a journey: and souldiers upon a march; seeing such things are but for a season, and they hope for better afterwards. Lord I am sensible that this counsel, *viz.* to be content with food and raiment, is very good. Oh give to me and others a heart to take it. If we need many things, and are not satisfied without the best of every thing we need, (of such sort as food and raiment) it is our weakness. So people that are sick would taste of every bodies

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beer, and none is good enough for them: some is too new, some too ſtale, some too bitter, ſome too ſower, ſome too ſtrong, ſome too ſmall, ſome fault there ſeemes to be in all; whereas it may be there is no fault in any, but all the fault is in their diſtempered pallates. One ſort of drink ſerves him that is in health (let that one be what it will, ſo it be but tollerable) Lord give me that health within my ſoul that I may not long for any thing that is not ſimply needful, nor be diſpleaſed with any thing that is truly good, though not the beſt, (as being humbly perſwaded that every ſuch thing is better than I deſerve) let me not ſeek great things for my ſelf, at any time, but leaſt of all at ſuch a time as this, in which thou haſt *broken down what thou didſt once build up, and plucked up what thou didſt once plant, and ſeemeſt to be bringing evil upon all fleſh*: as thou didſt threaten the *Jewes* of old, *Jer.* 45. 5. May I be able to ſay with *David*, *Pſal.* 131. 2. *I do not exerciſe my ſelf in things that be too high for me: I have quieted my ſelf as a child that is weaned of his Mother: my ſoul is as a weaned child.* Oh give me contentedly to feed on any thing, when thou wilt have me feed no longer on the milk of thoſe more luſcious comforts which I have formerly enjoyed. Let the food of my body be what thou wilt; ſo thou wilt but feed my ſoul with that bread of life which came down from heaven: and let my bodily raiment be ever ſo mean, ſo thou wilt but enable me to put on the *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, and give me to be cloathed in the garment of that elder brother, the robe of whoſe righteouſneſs is that *white raiment ſpoken of*, *Rev.* 3. 18. which ſuffereth

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not the ſhame of our ſinful nakedneſs to appear. If I have but food and raiment for my ſelf: the worſt is, I can contribute little, if any thing, to others: but this I know, that *where there is a willing mind, thou acceptest according to what a man hath, and not according to what he hath not*, 2 *Cor.* 8. 12. With God the will without the deed is more than the deed without the will. 2 *Cor.* 8. 10. He is *rich in good works*, who is *ready* (that is wholly inclined) *to diſtribute*; if he had but wherewithall, 1 *Tim.* 6. 18. Lord, if thou wilt make me thy Steward, intruſting me with an eſtate wherewith I may do good to others: I ſhall count it a bleſſed thing to be both able and willing to give; rather than to be on the receiving hand. But if thou wilt allot me only food and raiment for me and mine, and that none of the beſt neither: thy will be done; that I know will bear our charges through this world. Mannah and old cloaths (for the *Iſraelites* had no new ones for 40. years together) will ſerve us in the Wilderneſs: only ſweeten our paſſage, by aſſuring us we ſhall at laſt arrive at thy heavenly *Canaan*; and then ſhall we ſay, The lines are fallen to us in a pleaſant place, verily we have a goodly heritage.

DISCOURSE V.

Of the way to be aſſured of Food and Rayment.

METhinks I hear one or other ſaying, we ſhould be well contented with Food and

Raiment, if we were but ſure of that; but ſo great is our charge, ſo vaſt have our loſſes been, times are ſo hard, trading ſo dead, and charity it ſelf ſo cold, and poverty ſo common and almoſt univerſal; that we do much fear we ſhall not have bread for our ſelves and Family, or if bread to eat, ſcarcely raiment to put on.

It is not hard to gueſs, if *Chriſt* were corporally upon Earth, and ſhould over-hear ſuch language; how and in what words he would upbraid you. Surely, as he did them to whom he ſpeaks, *Mat.* 6. 30. *O ye of little faith.* The occaſion of which words appears by the context to have been a ſinful miſtruſt they had, that God would not ſo much as feed and cloathe them. How many at this day are ſick of the ſame diſeaſe? and therefore had need to be put in mind of that courſe which Chriſt took to cure thoſe, to whom he ſpoke: which remedies may prove as effectual upon themſelves. No advice at firſt might ſeem more ſtrange than that which *Chriſt* gives, *Mat.* 6. 25. *Take no thought for your life, what you ſhall eat, or what you ſhall drink, nor yet for your body, what ye ſhall put on.* One would wonder where-with-all *Chriſt* ſhould make good that ſaying of his, and yet we finde him giving a plain reaſon of what he had ſaid, *verſ.* 26. *Behold the fowles of the aire, they ſow not, neither do they reape, nor gather into barnes, yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they,* verſ. 28. *And why take ye thought for raiment? conſider the Lillies of the Field, how they grow, they toyle not, neither do they ſpin, yet* Solomon *in all his glory was not arrayed like one of theſe,* verſ. 30. *Wherefore if God ſo cloathe the graſſe, which to day is, and to mor-*

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row, is cast into the Oven, shall he not much more cloathe you? I am far from thinking that *Christ* by those words of his, intended to encourage idleness, or to give men to think, that though they could work and would not, yet God would provide food and raiment for them; as he doth for the birds, that neither sowe nor reape, and for the Lillies that neither toile nor spin; but I rather think that those words were spoken to incourage those that would work and cannot, as namely those that are bed-ridden, such as have lost the use of their limbs, or of one or more of their senses, as sight, hearing, and that such, though unable either to sowe or reape, (like the fowles of the aire) either to toile or spin, like the lillies, yet ought not to doubt, but that he who feedes the one, and cloaths the other, will do as much for them. Why may not those that have the use of their limbes and senses (together with a heart to make any good use of them) be fortified against the fear of want by those arguments, which may relieve, even those that want them? Were I lame or blind, or paralytick, or bed-ridden: to think of Gods feeding the Birds and cloathing the Grasse, might be a support to me: but if I have all my limbes and senses; not only may faith swim in the forementioned consideration of that which God doth for bruites and plants, but there is also a shallower water, in which reason and sense may a little wade. He that can work, and is willing so to do, may rationally hope he shall not starve.

The instance I have mentioned was an encouragement from providence, which is no ways to be slighted. But there are also promises to sup-

port our faith in the case. *viz.* that God will certainlie feed and cloathe us; at leastwise upon such reasonable termes and conditions, as he hath engaged himself to do it. Is not that a promise plain enough? *Psal.* 37. 3. *Trust in the Lord and do good, and verily thou shalt be fed.* God hath repeated this promise over and over, to let us see he is mindful of what he hath spoken. *Psal.* 34. 9, 10. *O fear ye the Lord ye his Saints, for there is no want to them that fear him. The young Lions do lack and suffer hunger, but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing.* If we desire a cloud of witnesses, or co-witnessing promises to shield us from the fear of want (as the *Israelites* had a Pillar of Cloud to shelter them in the Wilderness) it will not be difficult to add many more. Hee in whom all the promises are yea and Amen, assureth us from his own mouth, that if we *first seek the Kingdom of God, & his righteousness, all these things shall be added to us,* (*Mat.* 6. 33.) *viz.* meat, drink and cloathing: for those were the things he had been speaking of, *vers.* 31. The Scripture saith, that *Godliness hath the promise of the life that now is.* Now a security for food and raiment, one would think were as little as any thing so called, can amount to. Moreover in *Psal.* 84. 11. It is said, that God *will with-hold no good thing from them that walk uprightly.* So that if food and raiment may be reckoned good things (as things of so absolute necessity must needs be reckoned ordinarily) then come they within the compass of that general promise. Examine we one witness more, *Prov.* 10. 3. *The Lord will not suffer the soul of the righteous to famish* (that is the righteous person himself) I may not omit to con-

conſiderable teſtimonies, as thoſe which follow, *Pſal.*33.18,19. *The eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, and that hope in his mercy, to keep them alive in Famine. Pſal.*37.19. ſpeaking of *the upright*, he ſaith, *In the dayes of Famine they ſhall be ſatisfied. Prov.*5.20. *In Famine he ſhall redeem thee from death.* It is far more difficult to feed men in a time of famine, than of plenty: as it was not ſo eaſie to ſpread a table in the wilderneſs, as in a fruitful Countrey: (I mean for any but God, to whom all things are not only poſſible, but eaſie.) Methinks the promiſes of ſupplies even in famine, ſhould be great ſupport in a time of common plenty, though things be ſcarce with us.

But let me take in all thoſe conditions, on which God hath ſuſpended the promiſes of food and raiment, (as I have already mentioned ſome of them) leſt we ſhould think God to fail of his promiſe, when it is only we that fail in thoſe conditions, to which it is made.

One condition is, that we uſe diligence, *Prov.* 10.4. *He becometh poor that dealeth with a ſlack hand: but the hand of the diligent maketh rich. Prov.*19.15. *An idle ſoul ſhall ſuffer hunger*, which plainly implies, that a diligent ſoul ſhall not. It will be a new leſſon to ſome, both old and young to become paine-takers. They have not known what it meant, to eat their bread in the ſweat of their browes. But they that be afraid of work, ſuch as they are able to performe, are worſe ſcared than hurt, (as we ſay proverbially) and wil finde that the bread of diligence is far more ſweet, than ever was that of idleneſs. Thoſe that are given to hunt, account the exerciſe as good

as the Venison, and better too. God puts no hard termes upon us, if henceforth he will make us earne our bread before we eat it, though he have formerly so much indulged us, as to let us eat the bread we never earned. Idle persons have oft times meat without stomacks: but paines-takers have both stomacks and meat. That house stands upon able pillars, and is like to last, in which every body is addicted to honest labour, which is one of the most imitable things. I have heard of the *Dutch*, that from the time their Children are of any growth or understanding, they set them to work. They seem to have taken warning by those words of *Solomon*, *Eccles.* 10. 18. *By much sloathfulnes the building decayeth, and thorough idleness, the house droppeth thorough*, which words made me to say, that house stands upon able pillars, where every body is well imployed. If that were the worst fruit of the late fire, that idle persons of what quality soever, were forced to take pains, the matter were not great: yea many would be made better by it.

Moreover to our Diligence we must add frugality: if we would promise our selves never to want food and raiment. Frugality is the pruning-hook, which lops off all the unnecessary branches of superfluous expences? God hath no where ingaged himself to maintain any mans pride and prodigality: though he hath to supply his necessity. It is usual with God to let prodigals come to huskes: yea and want them too, before they die, or return. *Prov.* 23. 21. *The drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty.* It is a fault in those that gain by it, to let their customers have as much wine as they will call for, when they

they have had enough already: A greater fault in Parents, to let them have money at will, knowing they will ſpend it upon their luſts. It is not then to be expected, that God who hates to ſee men make proviſion for the fleſh, ſhould bind himſelf to give them wherewithall to do it. As therefore we would be ſure of food and raiment, let us wiſely conſider what muſt be ſpent, and what may be ſpared. *Fruſtra fit per plura.* He that requires ſuperfluities, is like to want neceſſaries; but he may build upon a ſupply of neceſſaries, who hath learnt to pare off all ſuperfluities. They are deſires of Gods own creating, (and in ſuch a meaſure) which do call but for neceſſaries, as food and raiment: and therefore he that made theſe deſires, we may expect will ſatisfie them. But when we crave ſuperfluities, it is ſin that opens its mouth wide, yea which inlargeth it like hell, and what reaſon is there that God ſhould fill it?

And as we muſt be frugal, in caſe we would be ſure of food and raiment; ſo one good way is to be mercifull, and ready to diſtribute to the neceſſities of others, ſo long as we have wherewith. Frugality and charity may well ſtand together. It is no ill husbandry to lend what we can ſpare upon infallible ſecuritie, and for great advantage. *He that gives to the poor, lends to the Lord.* And if the principal be but a *cup of cold water*, he ſhall have conſideration for it. *Matth.* 10. 42. *He ſhall in no wiſe loſe his reward.* See *Pro.* 11.24. *There is that ſcattereth, and yet encreaſeth.* Can a man reap, unleſs he firſt ſow? or reap liberallie if he ſow but ſparinglie? Who ſo ſhall read *Pſal.*41.1,2,3. will finde that one of the beſt

waies never to want our ſelves, is not to let others want if we can help it. *He that conſidereth the poor, God will conſider him*; though he have neither ſtrength, nor certaintie of friends, or money to help him, or hardly one that he can promiſe himſelf will make his bed for him. Where the three laſt mentioned qualification do meet in Diligence, Frugalitie, and merciful diſpoſition, it is ſeldom, if ever ſeen, that God doth ſuffer ſuch perſons to want neceſſaries: though ſaving grace, and the true feare of God be not found in them.

But if any deſire yet further ſecuritie, as for matter of food and rayment; let them conſider what is ſpoken. *Pſal.* 104.27. *Theſe wait all upon thee, that thou mayſt give them their meat in due ſeaſon. Thou openeſt thy hand, they are filled with good*, viz. Thoſe *innumerable creeping things, both great and ſmall, which are in the Sea*, ſpoken of *v.* 25. alſo *The young Lions which roar after their prey, and ſeek their meat from God*, ſpoken of *v.* 21. alſo, *Pſal.* 145.15. *The eyes of all wait on thee, thou giveſt them their meat in due ſeaſon. Thou openeſt thy hand, and ſatisfieſt the deſire of every living thing.* Here we ſhall do well to remember, what the *Apoſtle* ſaith, *Doth God take care for Oxen?* that is, doth he not take more care for Mankind, than for Oxen? If then he feed them (and creatures of leſs uſe than they) may we not conclude, he will much more feed us! may not theſe words of *David*, *Pſal.* 23d, afford us ſome reliefe, *The Lord is my ſhepheard, I ſhall not want.* Is not God a ſhepheard to other of his people, as well as he was to *David*? Yea are we not in ſome ſenſe his ſheep, as we

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are meerlie his creatures. *Psal.*100.3; *It is he that made us, and not we our selves: we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.*

Should not the extraordinarie waies which God hath taken to supplie men with food and rayment, when ordinarie means have failed, be some stay to us? When the *Israelites* wanted bread in the Wilderness, did not God rain down Manna from heaven? and when they wanted water, did he not give it them out of the rock? and whereas there was no cloathing to be had there, did he not keep their garments from waxing old, and make them serve them forty years? Did not God say to *Elijah*, 1 *King.*17.4. *I have commanded the Ravens to feed thee*; and accordingly they *brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and likewise in the evening*, *v.*6. The widdow of *Zarephath* had but a handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oile in a cruse for her self and her son, when there was yet three years famine to come: so that she reckoned but upon one good meal, and so she and her son to lie down and die; and out of that the Prophet did demand a cake for himselfe, *v.*13. yet did he assure her, that *the barrel of meal should not waste, nor the cruse of oyle faile, till the Lord sent rain upon the earth*; and accordingly it came to pass, *v.*16. Who knows not the storie of *Christ* his feeding *five thousand with five loaves and two fishes? Mat.* 14.19. and yet there was enough, and to spare. I have somewhere read of a good man, who in the time of the siege and famine at *Rochel* was kept alive by a Hen that came every day and laid one egge, one or more in the place where he lodged. Nor do I doubt but there are many

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true stories of as remarkable supplies vouchsafed to such as were destitute of ordinarie means. Is not God the great housholder of the world, from whom the whole familie in heaven and earth is named? and do you think he will starve those that are of his familie? howbeit he hath told us, that he who provides not for his own houshold is worse than an Infidel? Is not the earth the Lords, and the fulnes thereof? *Are not all the beasts of the forrest his, and the cattel upon a thousand hills?* *Psal.* 50. 10. And will he starve us (think you) either by the want of food or raiment; whilst he hath such an overplus of all needful things wherewith to supply us? What father would see his childe want, whilst he had more than enough to give him? If we then that are evil will not let our children want whilst we abound, shall we think so hardly of God? what if God hath put the world into other mens hands, and not into ours? hath he not the hearts of those men in his own hands, and can he not inlarge them towards us, when and as far as he pleaseth? He can make enemies not only to [illegible] peace with us: but to be kind to us. *Psal.* [illegible]46. *He made them also to be pitied of all them that carried them captives. The barbarous people shewed us no little kindnes*, saith *Paul*, *Acts* 28 2. How easily can God perswade even *Egyptians* to part with their *Jewels & Earings*, to his people; how much more *Israelites* to one another? He that can make enemies to become our friends, how much more friends to be friendly? Though men be very hard, he can as well make them succour us, as fetch water out of a rock? It is ordinary with God to make them shew his people

people moſt kindneſs in their extremity, from whom they did little or leaſt expect it. Thoſe whoſe hearts were ſhut towards us in the time of our plenty, ſhall (it may be) be wide opened in and under our neceſſity. A friend is ſaid to be made for Adverſity: and God makes thoſe friends for his people at ſuch a time, though at other times they were not ſuch. *Elijah* could leſt expect to be fed by a Raven, of all creatures (from whoſe aptneſs to take, rather than give, comes our word ravenous) neither did the Ravens do any thing for him till the famine came; but then they were his good purveyors (as God would have it) that brought him all his proviſion. We ſhall never know what friends God will raiſe us up till we ſtand in need of them. God will be ſeen in the mount: that is, juſt in the time of extremity; for then is his opportunity.

David tells us that he had *never ſeen the righteous forſaken, nor his ſeed begging bread*, *Pſal.* 37. 25. yet he ſaith, he was an old man when he made that obſervation. If his experience ſatisfie us not, let us conſult our own. Have we ſeen that which *David* never ſaw in this kind? Take but the ſeed of the righteous for their righteous ſeed, and give inſtance if you can of any of them that have wanted bread, or made a trade of begging it? As for vain prodigals: it is fit they ſhould be brought to huskes, and not have a belly full of them neither; nor is there any likelier way to bring them home. But it is not Gods manner to deal ſo with others, eſpecially at a time when there is bread ſtirring in the world; (I mean when there is no publick famine,

famine, or when the earth yields its increase as at other times.)

If God bring famine upon a Nation: if he turn a fruitful Land into barrenness; I cannot say, but in that case some truly righteous persons may die by famine (as well as others by pestilence) but there are several things to relieve us against that kind of fear.

First, the case of famine is rare and extraordinary. Few rich men torment themselves with fear of want; though if a famine come, such as was in *Samaria*, they must want bread as well as others; because it will not be to be had for love or money. But think they God seldom visits a people with cleanness of teeth, or comes riding to them upon his pale horse, to kill with hunger, as it is *Rev.* 6. 8. and why should we torment our selves with fear that he will do so?

Again, if good men perish in and by a common famine, it is because they faile in some, or other condition to which the promises of being kept alive in famine, are made; as namely, they want faith to trust God for bread in a time of famine: and so it comes to pass that they want bread: but if that and other conditions on which the promises of supplies are suspended were performed by them; God would sooner rain down bread from heaven, than suffer them to starve. So that you see good men have a conditional security for bread, even in a time of famine. But in case, through their failing in some part of that condition, any of them should come short of the promise; here is this to comfort them, that if God do bring them to huskes, yea to want a belly-full of huskes, who yet are no prodigals,

prodigals; that is no unrighteous or ungodly persons (as to the main) it is for no worse an intent than to fetch them home, so much the sooner to their Fathers house, where is fulness of bread; that is, to heaven where is fulness of joy. But methinks the extremity of Mens fear as to want, might be taken off, by considering that if they be but diligent, frugal, mercifully inclined, but especially if the true fear of God be before their eyes, they need not doubt of bread, according to the experience of Gods dealing with others, save only in time of Famine: nor shall they want it then, if they have but hearts to trust God for it. If there be bread in the Land, you shall have part of it. If you can show no instances to the contrary, why should you not believe it? If there be no bread in the Land, but an universal Famine; rich men must want as well as you, who yet fear no want, because they perplex not themselves with the supposal of a famine, which they hope never to see.

A little more to shame our mistrust of Gods giving us food and raiment. Let me quote one other Text, and it is *Rom.* 8. 32. *He that spared not his only Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?* Had we not a World of unbelief to deale with all, many things I have said in this Chapter, might have been spared: but as the case stands with many, all I doubt is little enough to shore up, and to under-prop their tottering faith; which knows not how to trust God, no not for food and raiment. We little think how we reproach and undervalue God, whilst we suspect that he will not so much as feed and cloath us.

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Doth not the Scripture say, that our Maker is our husband? If a Woman marry a rich Man able to maintain her liberally, and yet vex herself with a conceipt, that he will not finde her things necessary, and think he can never give her promises and assurances enough, that she shall never want cloathes and victuals whilst he lives, what a wofull disparagement would he take it for? you think me very cruel, unnatural and lordid, (would he say) and though that thought be without ground, I know not how to perswade you otherwise. It is not usual with Parents to promise their children over and over that they will not starve them, the children that have honest and able Parents use to take that for granted. It is only our unbelief that hath extorted from God so many promises of that nature, whereby though we greatly dishonour him, yet is he pleased to condiscend to our weakness. Where shall we find faith to believe those words, *Luk.* 12.32. *It is your Fathers pleasure to give you the Kingdome*: if in the mean time we cannot trust God for so much as food and raiment? possibly we shall have it but from hand to mouth: to day shall take no care of to morrow; but then to morrow shall take care of it self. Sufficient for the day shall be the supply, as well as the trouble thereof.

Lord sith then I have promises, providences, experience of thy dealing with others, consideration of divine attributes and relations, with several other things to secure me against the feare of absolute want: let me never dishonour thee, or perplex my self with the thoughts of any such thing. Let my only care be to live in my

Fathers

Fathers house, and to carry my self alwayes as in his sight, and I shall never want a belliful of huskes, nor yet have meer husks, (for thou feedest not thy children like swine) wherwith to fill my belly. Every thing that is good is not good for me: neither is the best of earthly things alwayes best for me, (no more than the best liquors are for him that is in a feaver.) Give me to walk in integrity before thee, and then I know thou wilt give me every thing that is good for me: for thy promise is, to give grace and glory, and that no good thing wilt thou with-hold from them that walk uprightly. Can I expect to *eat bread in the Kingdome of God*, as the phrase is, *Luke* 14. 15. and think that God will not give me bread to eat in this World? can I believe I shall be one day *cloathed upon with an house which is from heaven*, as it is called, 2 *Cor.* 5. 2. and yet think that God will deny me such cloathing, as my body stands in need of? he hath given *life, is not that more than meat? a body*, is not that *more than raiment*, *Mat.* 6. 25. he that hath given the greater, will he not give that which is less? *Our Heavenly Father knows we have need of food and raiment*, whilst we are in this World, and cannot live without it, *vers.* 32. Lord give me but to trust in thee, and to do good: and as thou hast said, so I believe, verily I shall be fed.

DISCOURSE VI.

Of a good conscience being a continual feast.

HOwever it comes to pass, the vulgar (and seemingly mistaken) quotation of the close

of

of that verſe, *Prov.* 15. 15. *viz.* in theſe words *A good conſcience is a continual feaſt*, ſounds much more ſpiritually, and like a ſaying of the Holy Ghoſt, than doth that tranſlation which is uſually given us, *viz.* in theſe expreſſions, *He that is of a merry heart, hath a continual feaſt*; which they that know no mirth but that which *Salomon* calls madneſs, will be apt to wreſt to a very bad ſenſe. The word tranſlated merry, is in the Hebrew *Tob*, which ſignifieth good, which is a better word in common acceptation than is the word merry: (for that is but too liable to an ill conſtruction) & may I take liberty to alter but that one word, and render the Hebrew Text *verbatim* word for word: A good heart, a continual feaſt; when we have compared it with the context, it will eaſily enough appear that the true ſenſe and meaning is, that which is generally underſtood by ſuch a ſaying as this, in that a good conſcience is a continual feaſt. For (if I miſtake not) that Proverb is ſeldom uſed; but by a good conſcience is intended, a conſcience not accuſing, but excuſing; not teſtifying againſt us, but with us, and for us, a conſcience ſpeaking peace, and ſuch as is a comfort and a rejoycing to us. That *Salomon* by a good heart doth intend ſuch a conſcience as that; the oppoſition in the foregoing words ſeemeth to imply; *All the daies of the afflicted are evil: but a good heart, &c.* intimating thereby, as if good were here oppoſed to grieved, wounded, afflicted: which interpretation is alſo countenanced by what followeth, *ver.* 16. *Better is a little with the fear of the Lord, than great treaſure and trouble therewith*, probably meaning trouble of mind and conſcience for the ill getting

ing of it; for other kind of trouble there may be where there is but a little, and that both gotten and enjoyed in the fear of God. And now we know what it is that *Solomon* here ſtileth a continual feaſt, we may be able to ſpeak to thoſe who having with *Dives* fared deliciouſly every day (which now they are not able to do as formerly) think it cold comfort to be told of meer food and raiment, and would be fain feaſting again, if they had wherewithall. Feaſt we may, and that not only now and then, but every day in the year, and every hour of the day, (and upon greater delicacies than any feaſt commonly ſo called conſiſts of) if we can but get that good conſcience *Solomon* ſpeaks of to feaſt withall. Indeed there is no contentment but a good conſcience, our bodies admit not of a continual feaſt: but our ſouls do. A full ſtomack loathes the honey comb. But there is no ſatiety in thoſe dainties, which conſcience feeds upon: much leſſe can we ſurfeit with them. As thoſe that have but almoſt dined, feel no troubleſome ſenſe of hunger, and yet could eat more: ſo a good conſcience, though it have that already, which may ſuffice, yet is alwaies left with a wholſome appetite.

What can be deſired, or what is ever enjoyed in a feaſt, but good chear, good company, good diſcourſe, mirth, muſick (now and then) as an help to mirth, and above all hearty welcome? I am deceived if a good conſcience do not afford all and every of theſe. Good meats and good drinks are that we count good chear, and if our meats and drinks be both for health and delight, thus do we account them good. A good conſci-

ence affords both meats and drinks, (as they may properly enough be called) as wholsome and as delightfull as can be wished. Meats and drinks, such as our bodies feed upon, there are none in Heaven. Yet something so called there is, else why is there mention of *eating bread in the kingdome of God? Luke* 14. 15. or why doth Christ speak of *drinking of the fruit of the Vine new in the kingdome of his father? Mat.* 26. 29. The bread of comfort, the Wine of joy, is that which Saints and Angels feast upon in Heaven; and the same for kind, though not for degree is that of a good conscience. It spreads a Table with first, second and third course. Its presenting us with a well-grounded perswasion of our being delivered from the wrath to come, as the Apostle saith we are not appointed to wrath, that is as it were the first course: it's witnessing that we are not only not children of wrath, (which alone would be a great comfort to be assured of) but also that we are the children of God, (as the spirit of God is said to witness with the spirits of Gods children) that is the second: and then its telling us that it is our fathers pleasure to give us, even us, a kingdome, and causing us to rejoyce in hope of the glory of God, that is the third.

Nor is a good conscience better cheer than it is good company. As a bad conscience is the worst companion in the World: so a good conscience is the very best, unless it be God himself. He that hath it, is many times never less solitary than when he is most alone, that is the best company that is both profitable and pleasant: and so is a good conscience; it hath that property of a good companion, amongst others, it will finde

good

good and pleasant discourse. What *Solomon* speaks concerning the Law of God, taught by parents to their children, *Prov. 6. 22. When thou goest it shall lead thee; when thou awakest it shall talk with thee.* So will a good conscience. An evil conscience findes such discourse as men have not patience to hear, like *Micaiah*, it never prophesieth good: but a good conscience commends without flattery, and tells those stories that would not be grievous to a man to listen to from morning to night. It speaks like God in his sentence of Absolution, well done good and faithful Servant. No man can frame a discourse so delightful, as are the whispers of a good conscience, speaking peace and pardon to us in the name of God. Where such company and such discourse is, there can want no mirth, taking mirth in the sobereſt sense, for comfort and refreshment; yea it will make the heart more glad than they whose wine and oile increase.

And as for musick; all the voices and instruments in the World cannot make such melody as a good conscience. If a man had all those *Men-singers*, and *Women-singers* that *Solomon* had, *Eccles.* 2. 8. their best notes were not comparable to this.

Nor is it hard to make out how a good conscience can and doth give a man hearty welcome. For as Christ in several senses is both Priest, Altar, and Sacrifice: so is that, both our feast, and our Host, our entertainer, and our entertainment. Conscience doth as it were grudge a wicked man, both his meat and his mirth, but to a good man it saith, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart, for the

Lord accepteth thy person. Conscience bids much good may do him with all he hath, and tells him in the name of God, he is as welcome to it as his heart can wish, and hath it with as good a will. We count those men best able to feast, that have as we say every thing about them and within themselves, Corne, Cattel, Poultry, all of their own, Dove-houses, Warrens, Parks all within their own grounds, Ponds affording several sorts of fish, Trees yielding all sorts of fruits, &c. Such is he that hath a good conscience, he hath all materials for feasting within himself, and therefore may afford to do it, *Prov.* 14. 14. *A good Man shall be satisfied from himself.* *Viz.* from the consciousnes of his own integrity. As *Paul* saith, this is our rejoycing, *viz.* the testimony of our conscience, &c. *He* that hath this, hath meat to eat that the World knows not of, and such meat as he would not exchange for all the rarities and varieties that are at Emperors Tables. *He* blesseth himself, or rather God, when he thinks how much happier he is than the World takes him for, and how much better he fares than the World knows of: whereas they do or may blush, and inwardly bleed to think how much happier they are thought to be than indeed they are. I might add, he that feasts upon a good conscience, hath that kinde of meat which is also sawce for every thing, whereas others have the same sawce that spoiles all their sweet meat.

But possibly I cannot say more of the happinesse of a good conscience, than many can easily believe, from the experience of a bad one, and the misery they have felt by meanes of it. A good con-

conſcience think they were an excellent feaſt indeed if we had it. There is none like that, but as *Saul* ſaid, the *Philiſtims* were come up againſt him, and God was departed; ſo they, The Fire is come up againſt them, and hath taken away what they feaſted on before; and as for a good conſcience they wiſh they had it, but they have it not. Such a ſound ſpirit would bear their infirmities, but for want of it, they are not able to bear them. Were I ſure ſuch men were in good earneſt, to look after that good conſcience which they confeſs and complain they want; I would tell them for their encouragement, that there is a way for a bad, yea a very bad conſcience, to be made good; as well as a good one to be made better. Who can think that *Paul* had alwaies a good conſcience? the Scripture telling us that he was ſometimes a perſecutor, an injurious perſon, and a blaſphemer; yea, *that he did compell others to blaſpheme. Acts* 26. 12. conſidering that he had his hand in the death of many of Gods Saints. *Acts* 26. 12. *Many of the Saints did I ſhut up in priſon, and when they were put to death I gave my voice againſt them.* But manifeſt it is, that he had a good conſcience afterwards; therefore I ſay there is a way for a very bad conſcience to be made very good, and bleſſed be God there is ſo.

It is againſt Scripture to ſay, that a conſcience once deflowred can never recover its virginity. He who himſelf was born of a virgin, can reduce that conſcience to a virgin ſtate, which hath been the mother of many hainous ſins. *Heb.* 9. 14. *If the blood of bulls and goats, and the ſprinkling the aſhes of an heifer ſanctifieth to the pu-*

rifying of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ sanctifie your conscience from dead works, to serve the living God? It is sin alone that defiles the conscience, and makes it evil: Now sin is either immediately against God, or immediately against our neighbour, that is, against men: and that also is against God ultimately, though not firstly and only. Therefore *David* confessing his sin in the matter of *Uriah*, saith to God, *Against thee have I sinned.* He that would have a good (that is, a pure and peaceable conscience) must, if he be able, satisfie men for the wrongs and injuries done to them: as *Zacheus* resolved to do; or if he be not able, he must be sincerely willing and desirous so to do, and fully purpose it in his heart, if God shall ever make him able. For *nisi restituatur oblatum* is an old and a true rule (that is, either actually or intentionally) *non remittitur peccatum.* But as for the injury done to God by sin, either immediately or mediately, that no meere man is able to satisfie for, though he could give thousands of rams, and ten thousand rivers of oile, or would give the fruit of his body for the sin of his soul: Therefore as to that there is no way to get our sins carried into the land of forgetfulness, but by laying them by faith upon the head of *Christ*, who was tipified by the Scape-goat under the Law; no satisfaction to be rendered for them, but that which *Christ* our surety hath made and intended for the use and benefit of them; and them only who do or shall believe in him, and by repentance turn from dead works to serve the living God. *Col.* 1. 14. *In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.*

When

When these things are once done, namely, when care hath been taken to satisfie men, so far as we are able, for the wrongs done to them: when we have looked upon him whom we have pierced by sin, and truly mourned, when we have confessed our sins, and forsaken them, both actually for the present, and in sincere resolution for ever after: and when we have lifted up an eye of faith to *Christ*, as to the antitype of that brazen serpent, which was lifted up in the wilderness, as he that is able to take out the sting of sin out of the fiery serpent; and by faith laid hold upon his grace, as upon the horns of an altar: I say, when this is done, then is that conscience which was bad, become purely good; and when we can reflect upon what we have done, then do they become not only pure but peaceable, and consequently good upon all accounts. Now I see not what notion can be more comfortable to those that have brought a bad conscience into a bad condition than this, that a conscience extreamly bad may be made good: that which is impure may become very pure; and that which is unquiet, may become calm and peaceable, yea full of joy and triumph.

This premised, I think it no hard matter to tell many a man how he may be much more happie in a mean and impoverished condition, than he had wont to be in midst of all his plenty and prosperity. Get but a good conscience instead of a bad one: Get but peace within, (*viz.* that peace which passeth all understanding:) get but the pardon of thy sins, and the well-grounded perswasion of that pardon: get but a vi-

sion of thy sins as drowned in the red sea of Christ his blood: get but to look upon God as thy friend and father, and upon death as none of thine enemie (and where it is no enemy, it is and will be a great friend;) get but the Spirit of God to witness with thy spirit that thou art the childe of God: get but this for thy rejoycing, which *Paul* had, *viz.* the testimony of thy conscience, &c. and let me be miserable for thee, if thou who hast wanted these things in times past, when thou hadst the world at will, when once possest hereof, dost not become more happie in the enjoyment of meer food and raiment, than ever thou wert formerly, when waters of a full cup were wrung out unto thee. Some have said, Bread and the Gospel are good cheere: It is as true, that brown bread and a good conscience are so. He that hath those two, will finde no cause he hath to complain. And as the Prophet speaks, *Isa.*33.24. *The inhabitant shall not say, I am sick: the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity:* so neither will men repine that they are poor and despicable, and otherwise afflicted, if they come but once to know for certain that they are pardoned.

The true reason why many men do want so many outward good things, as namely, so much wine, so much company, so much recreation, &c. is because they want better consciences: had they more of a good conscience, to cheare and to refresh them, they would need less of other things. If *Saul* had not been possessed with an evil spirit, he had not wanted *David* to have plaied to him upon the Harp, 1 *Sam.*16. 16. One saith, that *the life of a wicked man is a continual Dver-*

sion.

ſon. If men were not wicked, they would not need the one half of thoſe diverſions which they betake themſelves to, as reliefs againſt the ſting of an evil conſcience. Notable is that counſel of the *Apoſtle*, *Eph.* 5.18. *Be not drunk with wine, wherein is exceſs: but be ye filled with the ſpirit.* v.19. *making melody in your hearts to the Lord.* When men want the comforts of Gods Spirit, and melody in their own hearts, they would ſupply that defect, if they knew how, with more than ordinary refreſhments, from thoſe good comforts of God which do gratifie and entertain their ſenſes; and thence probably it is that St. *Jude* joines thoſe two together, *Jude* 19. *Senſual, having not the Spirit.* They that frequently uſe Cordials, are ſuppoſed to be apt to faintings: for others had rather let them alone. Wine is obſerved to be a narcorick or ſtupifying thing, (witneſs the proneneſs of men to fall aſleep when they have drunk freely of it) and it is to be feared, that many do uſe it but as opium to conſcience. Now as Phyſitians ſay, the body is much endangered by the over-frequent uſe of opiates, natural opiates; ſo is the ſoul much more by thoſe things which caſt it for the preſent into a dead ſleep; for they do but keep that worm from gnawing at the preſent, which will afterwards gnaw ſo much the more, and never die; ſtupifying things remove not a diſeaſe, but fix it ſo much the more.

I ſee then, O Lord, what men muſt do if they would not only think themſelves happy, but be ſo indeed, if they would not be like hungry men that dream they eat, but finde themſelves empty when they awake, or thirſty men that dream

dream of drink, but awake and finde themselves deceived. *Isa.* 29. 8. If they would feast in good earnest, it must be by means of a good and quiet conscience. That men may want though they have houses full of Gold and Silver: that men may have, though Gold and Silver they have none. Riches cannot give it: poverty cannot hinder it. I am or would be at a point, whether my body feast at all, more or less; but for my soul, I desire not only a good meale now and then, but that continual feast of a conscience both pure and peaceable. I prefer that to all the far fetcht and dear bought varieties of fish, flesh, and fowle, which are at Princes tables. I see then men need not bid adieu to feasting, or reckon upon a bare commons after all the spoile this fire hath made. They need only change their diet for that which is much better than they had wont to live upon, and they may feast hereafter ten times for once they did heretofore, and be said in a nobler sense than ever *Dives* was, to fare sumptuously every day. Peace of conscience is *a feast of fat things, full of marrow, and of wines on the lees well refined*, as I may allude to *Isa.* 25. 16.

DISCOURSE VII.

Of getting, and living upon a stock of spiritual comforts.

AS it fareth with children whose nurses have milk enough in both breasts, but one is much

much hardet to be drawn than the other; they would willinglie lie altogether or moſtlie at that breaſt which may be drawn with moſt eaſe: ſo with many Chriſtians who have an intereſt both in Spiritual and temporal things, wherewith to ſolace themſelves, they are too too prone to live upon the breaſt of their worldlie comforts, which may be ſuckt (as it were) by ſenſe; rather than upon that of their Spiritual priviledges and advantages; which breaſt (though much the ſweeteſt and fulleſt) can no otherwiſe be drawn than by the exerciſe of faith. Now ſad experience convinceth us, that it is much more hard to exerciſe our faith, than to uſe our ſenſes; even as to draw water out of a deep well with a heavie bucket, is nothing like ſo eaſie, as to fetch it out of a ciſtern, where 'tis but turning the cock and the work is done.

The objects of faith are things remote, and the eye of faith is in its kind more weak than that of ſenſe: and to a weak eye it is much more difficult to view things that are at a great diſtance, than thoſe that are neer at hand. The advantage of a high place, a clear day, and (it may be) of a proſpective-glaſs to boot, may be all little enough to make us diſcerne thoſe things which are afar off: but without any ſuch helps, we can eaſily eſpie thoſe things which are cloſe by us; as are the objects of ſenſe compared with thoſe of faith. Why did that good man cry out, *Lord I believe, help thou my unbelief? Mark* 9.24. but that he found difficulty in the exerciſe of faith? How came it to paſs that *Chriſt* upbraided his eleven Diſciples all at once for their unbelief? *Mark* 16.14. but for the ſame reaſon.

reason? They did not believe those that said they had seen *Christ*, after he was risen (though he had told them he would rise again the third day) but had they seen him themselves they would not have doubted of it.

The exercise of our faith is opposed by sin and Sathan; so is not the use of our senses. Now men finding it no easie thing to set faith on work, and to keep that hand in ure, and in action, without which they cannot fetch in the comfort of their spiritual priviledges (for the Scripture speaking of *Christ* saith, *In whom believing, we rejoyce*; intimating, that without faith there can be no true rejoycing in *Christ*) and speaking of faith, saith, that *Faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen*; implying, that such things are no otherwise reallized and evidenced to us than by faith, and consequently no otherwise the matter of our joy than as faith makes them so. I say, men finding it so hard a work to believe, and to fetch in their comfort that way; too often content themselves with that meaner and lower kind of comfort, which more easily flows in upon them, and which doth as it were follow them as the rock, meaning the waters out of the rock are said to have followed the *Israelites* in the wilderness. Hence it is that whilst the world smiles upon them, they are apt like the fool in the Gospel, to sing *requiems* to their souls, because they have laid up in store for many years, and their barns are full. And hence it is that when God doth strip such men of earthly enjoyments, and as it were dry up that breast; even many good men are for the present at a very

Heb. 11. 1.

very great loſs: not that they want intereſt in better things than are taken from them, but becauſe they have diſuſed themſelves from ſucking at that harder, but ſweeter breaſt, which God hath provided for them, and doth alwayes continue to them. They have not accuſtomed themſelves to live by faith, and now they are to ſeek how to do it. Theſe men of might for the preſent cannot finde their hands. As we grow up we forget to ſuck, becauſe we have not uſed it of a long time, and ſo in this caſe.

How neceſſary is it then for Chriſtians, even whilſt earthly enjoyments laſt, to inure themſelves to live upon the hopes and expectations of heavenly good things? As Popiſh Prieſts put off the Laity with but one element, giving them the bread in the Sacrament, but denying them the Cup (which is as due to them, and rather more refreſhing:) ſo do many ſerve themſelves; feeding upon the bread of their temporal poſſeſſions, whilſt they refrain the wine of thoſe bleſſed hopes and expectations (as to another world) which belong unto them. But how much better were it for them to receive in both kinds? It is good (as our Proverb ſaith) for men *to have two ſtrings to their bowe.* What great heire contents himſelf with thinking only of that ſmall allowance which he enjoys, being under age, and doth not pleaſe himſelf with muſing how much greater things he is like to enjoy hereafter? who that hath both Viol and Lute, and can play excellently upon both, would let his Lute, which is the ſweeter inſtrument of the two, hang by the walls and uſe his Viol only, becauſe that is eaſier to be played upon of the two? Who would pluck

only

only the sowrish grapes which are at the bottom of his Vine, because they are next at hand, and mean time neglect those ripe clusters, which are at the top, because he cannot reach them without a ladder, and the pains of climbing? he enjoyes not the one half of what he might, who lives only or mostly upon the worser half of his enjoyments; like a man that should alwayes live in one of his houses, every way less convenient and pleasant, and suffer another that doth far transcend it to stand alwayes empty.

To what end hath the spirit of God made any of us to know the things that are freely given us of God, if we solace not our selves with the remembrance and consideration thereof? even then when God hath filled our cup with worldly good things, if not made it to run over. Should we draw waters from those upper Springs whilst the neather flow plentifully? and are we not as much or more concerned to do it, when the neather springs are dried up? when the Fig-tree blossomes not, and there is no herd in the stall, woe unto us if we know not then (at leastwise then) how to rejoyce in the Lord; and joy in the God of our salvation: hast thou interest in better things, and wilt thou not live upon the comfort of them: no not at a time when thou hast nothing else in effect to live upon? what had become of *David* at *Ziglag*, if he had not *encouraged himself in the Lord his God*? So elsewhere, when *David* saw his house declining; (which made him say, though my house be not so with God) did he not comfort himself with this, that yet God had made with him an everlasting Covenant? who brings not out his old gold and

precious

precious Jewels to help himself withall, when all he had besides, is spent or taken away? shall all creatures be wiser than we? Dogs know their remedies when surfeited, *viz.* that they call Dog-grass: and Toades, when poisoned, theirs (*viz.* Plantane) and fall to them, if they be to be had. Is not an interest in spiritual things, if we have that, the only relief we have in the loss of all our temporal comforts? and shall we not make use of it? if a man have white bread to eat, would he suffer himself to be starved, because he hath no brown? will he keep it up in his Cup-board when he hath nothing else to eat? if you have a sort of comforts to live upon, besides those which are taken from you, live upon them: never lie down and die whilst you have wherewithall to live, yea and to live nobly.

A stock of well-grounded spiritual comforts, or a well-bottomed hope of glory will maintain a man at a great rate, though he have little else: yea like a Prince, if it be well improved. Have you not known men live chearfully and joyfully upon the expectance of great things in reversion, though they have had but little in possession? One would think the assurance (or what is next to it) of a Crown and Kingdome, after a short time of suffering, should raise and revive us more than the present fruition of a great Lordship, being all that ever we look for. He that upon Scripture-grounds believes himself to be an heir of heaven, let him but reflect upon what he believes, and that alone will be a heaven to him upon earth.

But do I not hear some say, they want a stock of spiritual comforts, or grounds of comfort;

they

they have no upper Springs to fetch water from, none of those Rivers which make glad the City of God, and therefore it is that their hearts faile them in an evil day. Yea doubtlesse therefore it is that their hearts do faile them, because they either have not an interest in God, or if they have, they know it not. Now as that holy man said to his friend touching assurance, verily assurance is to be had, and what have we been doing all this while? so say I to you, verily an interest in God is to be had, and see that you labour for it. It was a great fault and overfight not to look after it whilst we had a confluence of other good things: but now other things are taken away, it were utter madness to neglect it. From this time forward make it thy business to get an interest in eternal mercies, the sure mercies of *David*, and to know that thine interest; and then live upon the comfort of it: and then thou that never hadst it before, though God have cast thee (as it were) from the throne to the dunghil, even upon that dunghill shalt thou live better than ever thou didst in all thy life before. Doubtless a man may live more happily upon a great deale of assurance, having but a small pittance of other things, than upon great abundance of worldly enjoyments, having little or no assurance.

O Lord my heart deceives me, if the consolations of God be small with me (or in my accompt) if I could not live more contentedly upon bread and water, with calling and election made sure, than they who have their portion in this life, do when their Corn and Wine increase. Oh why do I press no harder after that which I take my

self

elf to have ſo great a value for? That is the only thing that makes me fear, leaſt my heart ſhould in this caſe deceive me. For it is not that God hath been wanting to incourage the endeavours of men in purſuite of ſpiritual and eternal mercies, ſo that we ſhould have cauſe to fear our labour would be in vain; for hath he not declared he is a rewarder of all them that ſeek him diligently? and that *to them who by patient continuance in well doing ſeek glory, he will give eternal life*, *Rom.* 2. And what more could have been ſaid?

I ſee then there are three ſorts of men. Some have matter and ground-work for ſpiritual joy, but will not take pains to improve it; they have (as it were) the breaſt in their mouths, but will not draw it, becauſe the milk is hard to come by, that is, they have good evidences for heaven, but will not trouble themſelves to clear them up; and to be ever and anon reviewing and reading them over. Lord if I be one of them, give me to ſee how much I ſtand, and have ſtood in my own light, how much I have leſſened my comforts by grudging my paines, how I might have doubled and trebled my joyes, if the fault had not been my own, others there are that content themſelves with a portion in this life, ſeeing and knowing themſelves as yet to have no intereſt in better things. Lord how deſperately do they adventure? how great a hazard do they run? If death ſhould come and finde them provided only for this preſent World, what would become of them? And yet there is a ſort of men more deſperate than theſe, (if more can be) and they are thoſe who are deſtitute of this World's good things, and yet neither have an intereſt in

ſpiritual comforts, nor yet regard to have any. God hath taken the World from them, and poſſibly will never give it them again, do what they can, and yet they look not after that better portion that can never be taken away from them. To ſuch I may ſay, not only what will they do in their latter end, but what will they do at preſent, what ſhift can they make ſo much as for the preſent? can men live of nothing: without either heaven, or earth, God, or the creature, comforts for either ſoul or body? where are they but in hell, who are neither in heaven nor yet upon the earth? (in the World I mean) Surely ſuch men care not what becomes of them. I cannot better compare them to any thing than to a ſhip turned adrift in a mighty ſtorm, whoſe Pilot ſteeres her no longer, but expoſeth her to the mercy of winds and waves, and rocks, and ſands, and it is a thouſand to one if ever ſhe get ſafe to harbour. Lord of all ſorts of men, let me be none of this laſt. Let me ſecure one World at leaſt, and if but one, let it be the World to come. The more thou abridgeſt me of earthly comforts; the more inſatiable let me be in my deſires of thoſe that are heavenly? The more hungry thou keepeſt me, as to a ſupply of earthly things, the more thirſty let me be after thoſe rivers of pleaſure, which are at thy right hand for ever more. O Lord, if I want a ground-work for ſpiritual joy, a root of peace within my ſelf, let me want it no longer; if I have a foundation for joy within me, but know it not: oh thou who haſt given me to have it, give me alſo to know it; and when I once know it, give me often to review and recollect

it,

it, to ruminate and chew the cud upon it, that I may enjoy the ſweetneſs of that, whereof I am really poſſeſt; that I may eat the fruit of the Vineyard, which thou haſt planted within me. Lord truſt me with a ſtock of ſpiritual comforts: with plenty of good hope thorough grace: kiſs me with the kiſſes of thy mouth, and let thy banner over me be love, and give me to ſit under the ſhaddow of thy favour with delight; and if ever I envy thoſe pittiful worldlings that have more of this than heart can wiſh, but no more of any World but this, if ever I be willing to change conditions with them, (all things conſidered) though they be wealthy, honourable, powerfull; I poor, mean, deſpicable: let me forfeit all again, yea take thou the forfeiture of all thy ſpiritual comforts again, which yet I would not thou ſhouldſt do for ten thouſand Worlds.

DISCOURSE VIII.

Of its being a great mercy to moſt Men, that their lives are continued, though their livelihoods are greatly impaired.

I Have not forgotten the words of good *Elijah* when he fled into the Wilderneſs for fear of *Jezabel*, who ſought his life, how he ſate him down under a Juniper Tree, and requeſted for himſelf that he might die, and ſaid, *It is enough now oh Lord, take away my life*, 1 *Kings* 19. 4. Not yet the words of *Job* to the ſame effect. *Chap.* 7. 15. *My ſoul chooſeth ſtrangling and death*

rather than life; nor yet that peremptory answer of *Jonah*, when God asked him if he did well to be angry for the gourd? who told God to his face, *He did well to be angry, even unto death. Jonah* 4. 9. These things are not recorded in honour of any of these three Men, but as *David* speaks of himself; I said this is my infirmity: so may we say, these were their infirmities; they were good men, but these were bad expressions, and are delivered to us, not for our imitation, but for our warning and caution; and as the *Apostle* speaks in another case, 1 *Cor.* 10. 6. *These things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.* But how incident is it to us to do the same thing, even to wish for death, when God hath deprived us of many comforts of life, which formerly we enjoyed: as if it were not worth while to live, unless it be in wealth, honour and prosperity.

This is such a pernicious error, that I am very zealous to confute it, and to establish that useful principle which is contrary to it; namely, that to escape with our lives is a very great mercy; though we have no such comfortable livelihoods as we had wont to have: yea though a bare livelihood or meer subsistence be all we have. *Job* saith in one place, *I am escaped with the skin of my teet, Job* 19. 20. meaning very poor and bare. As *Deodate* parallels it with a proverb some use, that *such a one hath nothing left him but his teeth.* Though it may seem a paradox, yet it is a very truth; that it is a great mercy to most people living under the Gospel, to escape (*viz.* death and the grave) though it be but with the skin of their teeth: that is, in as bare a condition

as

as bare can be, and live; to live, though it be under poverty, disgrace, restraint, and many evils more. Whilst the pride and passion of Men suggest the contrary: Nature it self gives them the lie, and votes for living, when they vote for death: as *the fable of the Countrey-man*, doth ingenuously intimate, *who being weary with his bundle of sticks, laid it by, sate down and wished for death: death over hearing him, came and desired to know what he had to say to him. Nothing*, *replyed the Country-man, but that thou wouldst help me up with my burthen.* Shewing that he was more willing to take up his burthen again, than to lay down his life. Why should a *Man give all he hath for his life*, (*Job* 1.) if life be nothing worth, when all a man hath is gone? Were the enjoyment of honour, riches, pleasure, the only or the greatest end of life: when those were once taken away, it would be scarce worth while to live; nay death might be more elegible of the two: but seeing the great ends of life are such things, as are as much within the reach of those that are poor, despised, afflicted, and that *never eat with pleasure*, as the phrase is, *Job* 21. 25. As those who are rich, renowned, abounding with pleasures, *whose breasts are full of milk, and their bones moistned with marrow, who are wholly at ease and quiet*; as it is expressed, *Job* 21. 23, 24. I say, forasmuch as the great ends of life are as pursuable, and as attainable by the former, as by the latter of these; as well the afflicted, as the prosperous ought to look upon the continuation of their lives, as a very great mercy.

Surely the great ends of life are; that whilst it is called to day we should mind the things that

concern our eternal peace: that *we should seek after God, if haply by seeking after him we may finde him out*, *Acts* 17. 27. That we should *lay up a good foundation for the time to come, that we may lay hold on eternal life*, 1 *Tim.* 6. 19. That we should now sowe what we desire hereafter to reape, *viz. To the spirit, that we may of the spirit reape life everlasting*, *Gal.* 6. 8. *that we might fight a good fight, finish a good course, keep the faith, and so become assured, that henceforth is laid up for us a crown of righteousness*, 2 *Tim.* 4. 7. These are the things which God did principally aime at in bestowing life upon Men, and to which he would have all the good things that Men enjoy, subordinated: yea and all their evil things made some way or other subservient: these are the greatest improvements that can be made of our lives, and the best uses we can turn them to; therefore these are the great ends of life. Had *Moses* thought otherwise, he had not *esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: or chosen to suffer affliction with the people of God, rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season*, *Heb.* 11. 25. 26. *Job* could easily have answered that question which himself puts, *Job* 3. 20. *Wherefore is life given to the bitter in soul which long for death, which are glad when they can finde the grave?* I say he could easily have answered his own question, if he had not been in too great a passion; for he knew full well that the great ends of life were those that I have mentioned, and therefore resolved accordingly that *all the dayes of his warfare he would wait till his change should come, viz.* preparing for it, as one that did remember, *that if a Man die, he*

shall

shall never live again, viz. to amend the errors, and to supply the defects of his former life, *Job* 14. 14. Now what should hinder but that a poor Man may pursue such ends of life, as well as one that is rich: yea the Scripture speaks, as if it were *harder for a rich Man* of the two: *Luke* 15. 24. *when Jesus saw that he was sorrowfull, he said, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the Kingdome of God? It is easier for a Camel to go thorough a Needles eye, than for a rich Man to enter into the Kingdome of God.* But if the poor man say; whilst I seek the Kingdome of God, what shall I do for other things in the mean time? Let him take an answer from our Saviours mouth, *Mat. 6. 33. Seek ye first the Kingdome of God, and the righteousness thereof, and all other things shall be added unto you.*

I have spoken to the great ends of life, and the attainableness of them, as well by persons of low as of high degree. But alas how few in comparison of the lump of mankind, or of Men called Christians, have yet attained those ends for which they live. *viz.* have laid up a good foundation for eternity, &c. and they are yet fewer who are able to say they have done it. For some may have attained thereunto, and yet not know it. How unsafely do they die, who die before they have attained the ends for which they did live? and how uncomfortably must they also die, who die before they know they have attained them? Therefore I say it is a great mercy to the greatest part of Men and Women to be reprieved from Death, and from the Grave. *David* as good a Man as he was, beg'd hard for this, *Psal.* 39. 13. *O spare me that I may recover*

ſtrength, before I go hence and be no more, yet was his condition at that time very afflicted, for he ſaith, *verſ.* 10. *Remove thy ſtroke from me, I am conſumed by the blow of thine hand*, verſ. 11. *when thou doſt correct man for iniquity, thou makeſt his beauty to conſume away like a moth.* Which he ſeems to ſpeak of, as his own caſe at that time, when he cried out, O ſpare me before I go hence. Is it not with moſt people in the World, as with idle Boyes in a School, at a time when their Maſter is abſent? when it is almoſt time to give over, they have ſcarce lookt into their books, or done any thing they came for, but played all the while? How neceſſary is it for ſuch Men to live a little longer? How ſad would it be with them, if God ſhould ſay to them, as to that ſecure fool: This night ſhall thy ſoul be required of thee? were they ſenſible of their own concernment, would not ſuch men prize a little time in the World, as thoſe poor *Levellers* did, that were ſhot at *Burford* about ten years ſince: *Oh that they might live but one day, or but one hour longer to enjoy theſe Ordinances of God, which they had formerly deſpiſed*: or as ſhe that in horrour cried out upon her death-bed; *Call time again, call time again*? If life be neceſſary for thee, as (if thou haſt not yet attained the ends of life, I am ſure it is more neceſſary for thee than any worldly thing) by how much it is more neceſſary that thou ſhouldſt be ſaved, than that thou ſhouldſt be rich or honourable. I ſay if life be more neceſſary for thee than riches and honour, and any thing of this World, as it is, becauſe upon that moment eternity depends: then haſt thou cauſe to look upon it as a great mercy, and to be very thankfull for it.

May

May it not be ſaid of ſome men that are dead & gone, that if they had died but one year, or one moneth ſooner, they had been damned? The laſt year, or the laſt moneth was more to them than all their life before, for that they were born (I mean born again) not long before they died. He that can cauſe *the earth to bring forth in one day; and a Nation to be born at once. Iſa. 66. 8.* How great a change can he make in the ſouls of men in a very ſhort time? Yea, I remember an excellent Divine of our own, hath a paſſage to this purpoſe, *viz. That one day ſpent in ſerious meditation of God and Chriſt, the joyes of Heaven, the torments of Hell, the evil of ſin, the excellency of grace, the vanity of the creature, the neceſſity of regeneration, and ſuch like things, might contribute more to the converſion and ſalvation of a ſinner, than all that hath been done by him in all the time paſt of his life, though poſſibly he hath lived many years in the world.* We ſhall never know what the worth of life, and of time is, till we come to improve it to thoſe high ends and purpoſes for which God hath chiefly given it: as namely, unto making our calling and election ſure, &c. but when we have done, finding how great a pleaſure a little time hath done us; of what unſpeakable uſe and advantage it hath been to us, we ſhall reckon our ſelves more bound to God for it than for any other temporal enjoyment; we ſhall think a little time (to ſpeak in the language of our *Proverb*) to have been *worth a Kings ranſome*. Conſider life as an eſtate of hope, (as *Salomon* ſaith, *Eccleſ. 9. 4. To all the living there is hope*) and death to the wicked as a hopeleſs ſtate. *Job 27. 8. For what is the hope of the hypocrite, though*

he

he have gained; when God taketh away his soul? and then tell me if it be not a great mercy, but to live? But oh the base heart of man, that will not suffer him to know how great a mercy life is, because it will not serve him to improve it! A life so spent as multitudes of people do spend theirs, will prove a curse rather than a blessing, as having done little in it, but treasured up wrath against the day of wrath. Nor is it ever to be expected that they will bless God for life, who have cause to curse the time that they have lived (though all thorough their own default.)

He that would comfort himself in the thoughts of his being yet alive, and take it for a great mercy that his life (though little else) is left him for a prey; let him sit down and consider, what earnings he may make of that time which is left him in the world, be it little or much. If from henceforth he shall set his face towards *Zion*: set out in the waies of godliness: give up his name to Christ: engage in the work he came into the world about: enter upon the fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom; set himself to seek the Lord with all his heart, or at leastwise repaire to the pool of *Bethesdah*, and wait there for cure; follow on to know the Lord, that he may know him: strive to enter in at the straight gate: dig for wisdom as for silver, and for knowledge, as for hidden treasure: make it his business that his soul may be saved in the day of the Lord; I say, whosoever shall do so, and persevere in so doing, will finde so happy a product of that work, whereunto he hath consecrated and devoted the remainder

of

of his life, as will make him prize and value one day so spent, more than many daies and moneths in which all the comfort of his life; (as he accounted it) came in by eating and drinking, and company-keeping; by hunting, hawking, dicing, carding, and such like divertisements. He will look upon that time as spent in damning his soul (as much as in him lay) but the other in saving it: and therefore he must needs value this more than that. One was a time of running into debt, the other of getting old scores paid off, or blotted out; and therefore must needs be the happier time of the two. One was a time of provoking his adversarie: the other a time of agreeing with his adversarie whilst he is yet in the way, *Matth.* 5. 25. or of kissing the Son, lest his wrath be kindled, and he should perish in the mid-way. When thou shalt begin to take acquaintance with thy closet, with thy Bible, with thy own heart, with the duties of meditation, prayer, self-examination, contemplation of heavenly things, to which thou hast formerly been a stranger: thou wilt confess thou didst but then begin to live, and that all thy time before, thou wert but like a dead body, assumed and carried about by an evil spirit; & wert altogether like the voluptuous widdow, of whom the *Apostle* saith, that *she is dead whilst she lives.*

I know but one sort of men that may reasonably look upon life to be less desireable as to them, than death: and that may justly reckon it a greater priviledge to die presently; than to live any longer; and they are those that can say with *Paul*, 2 *Cor.* 5. 1. *We know that if our house*

of

of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, eternal in the Heavens. Such only may with good reason have *mortem in desiderio*, that is, long to be dissolved: But yet they also must have *vitam in patientiâ*, that is, be content to live, though in the midst of trouble. But alas, how few of these are there in the Christian world; how rately doth this flower of assurance grow, even in the garden of the Church; yea, and amongst those that are no weeds themselves?

Then bless the Lord, O my soul, and let all that is within me, bless his holy name; yea, let others praise the Lord with me, and let us magnifie his name together, that we are yet alive, though haply stript of many mercies and comforts of life, which we have formerly enjoyed. O Life! thou art sweet, though full of care and feare, and hardship, and trouble on ever side; because thou art a day of grace, a time of making our peace with God, and getting the assurances of his love. Art thou yet dead in sins and trespasses? go to Jesus Christ for soul-quicknings, and thou maist come to live spiritually, ere thou die temporally, and be secured withall from dying eternally. Hath God hid his face from thee hitherto? take a right course; and yet before thou diest, maiest thou see his face with joy. Hath he concealed himself from thee hitherto, and spoken roughly to thee, as *Joseph* to his brethren? (when he called them Spies;) yet, as he at last said to them, I am your brother *Joseph*: so may God to us, I am your father; I am he that blotteth out your sins for mine own names sake; though thou hast all

this

this while sate in darkness, and as it were in the region of death; yet may the Lord be hence-forward a light to thee. Some render those words, *Deut.* 34.5. *Moses died upon the mouth of God* (as one descants) *God did as it were kiss him into heaven*: so may he do by thee when thou commest to die. Maiest thou not yet hear him saying to thee, as to his Church, *Isa.* 54.11. *Oh thou afflicted, tossed with tempests, and not comforted, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and thy foundation with Saphires!* Lord thou knowest how to make me more thankful for life without health, wealth, ease, honour, liberty, friends, than ever I was for life in conjunction with all of these. Cause me to improve life to those ends for which thou hast given it; and give me a blessed fruit of that improvement: then shall I easily acknowledge that meerly to live with such a heart, and for such a purpose, is more valuable than without this, to live and swim in all the profits, pleasures, and honours of this world.

DISCOURSE IX.

Of the comfort that may be received by doing good more than ever.

A Man may do more good at a time when he receives less. No man ever received less good from the world (or more evil) than *Christ* did; yet no man ever did more good in it, nor yet so much. *He went about doing good, Acts* 10. 38. yea, and it was *meat and drink to him, John* 4.34. that is, it was matter of great delight and comfort to him. There is a real pleasure in doing, as well as receiving good, *Psal.* 119.165.

Great

Great peace have they that love thy Law, and nothing shall offend them. It is surely a peace which passeth all understanding, that can guard the heart and mind against all that might otherwise offend. *David* had said, but just before, *Seven times a day do I praise thee* (which shews how well he imployed himself) and then he presently adds, *Great peace have they that love thy Law.* I have pitched upon this consideration, because there are some who since the Fire do even despaire of ever receiving so much good in and from the world as they have formerly done: from their trades, because they are lessned: their estates, because they are impaired; their friends, because they are impoverished. Now to such it may be a great relief, to think they may receive as much comfort by doing, as ever they have formerly done by receiving good: yea, and they may do as much good as ever they did (I do not say as ever they could) when yet they receive nothing like so much. Some Stars receive less light from the Sun, which yet give more light to the world: some smaller lights are greater luminaries; so may the world be better by us, and for us, than it had wont to be; when yet it was never so bad (that is so unkind and so unpleasant to us, and so straight-handed) as now it is.

There are more waies of doing good than with a mans purse onely (though that is one way in which all must do good that have it.) Men may do good with their heads, hearts, tongues, pens, lives: by their prayers, parts, graces, precepts, examples: most men have one talent or other wherewith to do good, though many have no hearts to use their talents, though

they

they be many and great. Men of great estates do not alwaies keep the best houses, or give the most relief to their poor neighbours; neither are the ablest men in any kinde, alwaies the most useful and serviceable to the publick. Some persons as able (it may be) as those that write Volumes, have never once appeared in print; yea, some of meaner gifts have furnished the world with many useful Treatises; which shews that they who have received less, may do more for God, more for themselves, more for the good of the Church, and of the world, than those who have received a great deal more; who it may be are either over idle, or over-bashful, or too much awed by that *Proverb*, *That he that comes in print, lies down and suffers every one that will to have a blow at him*; being over-tender of their reputations, like the delicate woman, that for delicacie will not set the sole of her foot to the ground (lest it should be any waies soiled or sullied) or hoping to seem greater by concealing themselves; like those Eastern Princes, that would not be seen of their subjects, because they would not be known to be but men. Or as if that which *Salomon* saith, is the way for a fool to be thought wise, *viz.* by holding his peace, were also the way for a wise man to be thought wiser. It is all in all in point of serviceableness, when men of but competent abilities do with the blessing of God set themselves to do good, and to be useful, they out-serve many that out-shine them; and have more comfort in two talents wel improved, than others have in five that lie dead upon their hands. Some are all for the Rake, that is, what knowledge,

ledge; and other good things they can ſcrape together for themſelves: but thoſe that are for the Pitch-fork (in a good ſenſe) *viz.* for laying out, as well as laying up, ſhall have more peace. *A good man out of the good treaſure of his heart bringeth forth good things. Matth.* 12. 35. What ſhould a woman do with full breaſts, if ſhe will not ſuffer them to be drawn? How many fine children hath ſome one poor woman brought up with her own breaſts, whilſt many gallant dames of ſtronger conſtitutions, and that might have made abler nurſes, never gave ſuck to one of their own children? Creatures without life do act *ad extremum virium*, the fire burns as much as ever it can burn: but ſo doth not mankind in many caſes, becauſe we limit the exerciſe of our power by the pleaſure of our wills: and therefore may be able to do more good in an afflicted, than ever we were willing to do, in a proſperous condition. The good which we receive may refreſh our ſenſes, but it is the good we do, that will more rejoyce our conſciences. *David* tells us, that *In keeping Gods commands there is great reward, Pſal.* 19. 11. Doing is a kind of giving, and the Scripture ſaith, *It is a more bleſſed thing to give than to receive.*

Lord, I deſire not to inſiſt upon it, that I may receive as much good as ever (temporal good I mean) but oh that thou wouldſt give me both an opportunity and an heart to do as much good, yea more than ever. I would pray, read, meditate, converſe with God, watch over my ſelf and others, warn the unruly, comfort the feeble minded, ſupport the weak, fight againſt ſin, exerciſe grace, ſerve the Church of God

more

more than ever, or better than ever heretofore; and ſo doing, I am confident, that though my eſtate and worldly allowance be diminiſhed; yet my real happineſs and comfort ſhall be much enlarged.

DISCOURSE X.

Of abſtracting from fancy, and looking at thoſe that are below our ſelves, rather than at others.

TRy if it be not a meer fancy and conceipt of thine, that thou doſt want any thing. Put caſe no man in the world had any thing better than what thou haſt: no better meat to eat, or cloathes to weare, or houſe to dwell in; wouldſt thou then finde any fault with thine own? or would it not ſerve thy turn very well? If thy reall wants were unſupplied, thou wouldſt be ſenſible of them, though every body elſe were under the ſame want. If there were a famine upon the Land, thou wouldſt feel hunger as much as if no body were deprived of bread but thy ſelf, when indeed every body were in the ſame caſe. But if thy condition be ſuch, as doth therefore only ſeem bad; becauſe others have that which is better; thou art but fancy-ſick, and under ſelf-created miſery. *Thou walkeſt in a vain ſhadow, and diſquieteſt thy ſelf in vain, Pſal. 39.6.* Thou wouldeſt be well enough, if thou couldſt but ſee and believe it is ſo well with thee as it is. *Crede quod habes & habes.* Meer fancy cauſeth neither good nor

evil really to exist, no more than colours do in the Rain-bow, or those things which meet us only in our dreams. Are not the riches of rich men a strong tower in their imagination? but are they therefore really so? yea, are they not like birds that take wing and flie away? Let a melancholly man read of all sorts of diseases incident to the body of man, and presently he conceits he hath them all: But is he therefore an Hospital, or a *Pandora's box* of all diseases, because he fancieth himself so to be? Was that mad man in the *Comedy* robd of any reall happiness when cured, who in his distraction fancied himself a Prince, and therefore when he came to himself cried out, *Rem me occidistis amici non servastis.* You have not cured me, but undone me.

Fancy can make no man truly poor, or hungry, or naked, or deformed; though it may make them really miserable, by a false supposition of any, or all of these. For a man to think himself not to have enough, onely because others have more, is such a kind of deception, as if a man of sufficient stature standing by a giant, should think himself to be a dwarfe. If we have enough, what matter is it who hath more? Why should our eye be evil, because Gods eye is good? If you think that others having more eclipseth you (and therefore thou art *afraid when one is made rich, and when the glory of his house is increased. Psal.* 49.16. then it should seem thou art not content with the world for use, but wouldst have it for splendor, and to glory in. Now that is forbidden, *Jer.*9.23. *Thus saith the Lord, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he under-*

standeth

standeth me, &c. If the world were any matter of glory, if men could really shine with the beames of the world, (as a wife is said *lucere radiis mariti*) it is the manifest pleasure of God, that so far forth they should out-shine us, to whom he hath given more of the world than to our selves. Either thou hast better things than those of this world to glory in, or thou hast not: If thou hast not, thou hast the one thing necessary to look after, instead of vying with others about the glory of this world (which is but a meer *Scheme* or fantasie, or piece of pure pageantrie.) And if thou hast interest in better things, thou dost out-shine many others in the sight of God, and in real worth; and therefore hast no cause to envie those (whom all things considered) thou dost out-shine; but to be very contented and thankful. If then thou wouldst be happy, abstract from fancie, undeceive thy self, know when thou art well. It is easier to fill thy belly than thine eye. Nature may quickly be satisfied: but fancy is insatiable.

Lord give me to make *Agurs* choice, and to be pleased with it when I have done, *viz.* not to have riches (which some have, and others thirst after) but to be fed with food convenient.

DISCOURSE XI.

Of neer Relations and Friends being greater comforts each to other, than they had wont to be.

ONe of the best waies that I know for the great loss sustained by the late Fire (and all

other temporal losses to be made up to us, is, by promoting a Brief (as it were) amongst relations and friends (if it may take) to contribute to the reparation each of other: which may seem a great paradox; that those who have been mutual and joynt-sufferers, should be recruited by a collection made amongst themselves. But so it is, the wives may greatly help to repair what their husbands have lost; husbands what their wives: children the losses of their parents; and parents the losses of their children; servants the losses of their masters, &c. My meaning is, let each of these, give themselves to be more useful and comfortable each to other in the relation, in which they stand one to another, and the contribution they shall make in so doing, will be very considerable; even in proportion to so great a loss. The comfort or discomfort of a relation (such as it may be) may signifie more than the gaining or losing a great part of an estate, if not the whole. How many good parents would chearfully part with more than half of their estates, on condition they might be able to say of some one or more of their bad children, as that father of his returning prodigal? *Luke* 15. 24. *This my son was dead, and is alive; was lost, and is found.* The miserable consequences of this dolefullest of fears, never cost some parents half those sighs and tears, that the miscarriages of some one childe hath done: nor would it refresh them so much to see *London* once again in its former glory, as to see their children brought into an estate of grace. When parents have been for several years together (as it were) in the pangs of a travelling woman,

which

which is the Apoſtles metaphor. (ὠδῖνω) What would they not give to be delivered, and to ſee the travel of their ſouls? Let children that were formerly otherwiſe, but become humble, ſerious, contented, diligent, dutiful, and above all, truly religious, evidencing the power of godlineſs to be in them; their parents that are ſuch, will eaſily acknowledge that God hath given them more in their children, than he took from them out of their eſtates, though they loſt many thouſands by the fire. If ever children that have almoſt broke their parents hearts, may ſo time their Reformation and Repentance, as to do their parents as much good as they have done them hurt, now is the time; if they ſhall labour to comfort them after ſo great a loſs, by giving them occaſion to celebrate their birth-day, (I mean the day of their new birth) whilſt they are yet in mourning for the deſtruction of *London*. Surely the ſoul of a childe to a religious parent is more than the glory of a City.

Can yoke-fellows do nothing towards repairing the loſſes each of other? What if husbands and wives ſhould more ſtudy and practice the duties of their reſpective relations? what if they ſhould pleaſe each other more for their good, to edification? what if there ſhould be a mutuall contention between them, which ſhould love and oblige the other moſt, and no contention but that? what if they ſhould bear more with each others infirmities, and ſeek the comfort of each others lives, as of their own? what if they ſhould ſtrive which of them ſhould bear the loſs moſt patiently, and moſt Chriſtian-like, and

ſhould moſt comply with the law of their new and mean condition? what if bad husbands ſhould henceforth become good, and good husbands better, and wives the like; would it no waies compenſate the loſs which hath been ſuſtained? Surely it would very much; yea, thoſe that know how great a croſs ſome maſters have had, and have in their ſervants, what with ſtubbornneſs, negligence, unfaithfulneſs, & other ill qualities; eſpecially thoſe that have matters of great truſt to employ them in, cannot but think it would greatly comfort them after their loſſes, if thoſe ſervants of theirs, *Oneſimus*-like, ſhould of unprofitable become profitable, and of rebels converts. If every family were furniſhed with loving yoke-fellows, carrying (as it were) one ſoul in two bodies, dutiful and gracious children, diligent and faithful ſervants, ſhould they weare, and fare, much more meanly than they did heretofore, yet would their lives be much more happie than they had wont to be. If there be any Relations ſo bad they cannot mend (as I hope there is not) or any ſo good they need not mend (which I very much doubt) this counſel doth not concern them: but if neither, then is it a good expedient for every family in ſome meaſure to repaire their loſſes by; and how do I wiſh it may be put in practice?

Lord thou haſt told us that *a brother is born for adverſity. Prov.* 17.17. ſo is a husband, a wife, a parent, a childe. Grant Lord, that we may all walk in the ſeveral relations in which we ſtand, ſo like perſons born or cut out for ſuch a time of adverſitie as this, that we may help to make up

that

that breach each for other, which thy righteous hand hath made upon us all.

DISCOURSE XII.

Of training up children in Religion, that they may come to have God for their portion.

HAve we not heard ſome parents ſince this Fire, bitterly crying out, Alas! what ſhall they do for their poor children? They are grown up, and ready for portions to diſpoſe in the world; and their portions, the fruit of many years care and ſore travel, were not long ſince as ready for them: but in came the Fire like a giant refreſhed with wine, mighty to run his race, and ſwept them all away. And now where ſhall they have ſtocks for their ſons that were about to ſet up for themſelves? where ſhall they have portions for their daughters to beſtow them in marriage? wherewithall ſhall they breed their younger children like themſelves, as they have done the reſt? To them that ask theſe queſtions, give me leave to anſwer thus: If your children want nothing elſe but handſome breeding, as to curious works, Muſick, Dancing, and ſuch like; if your ſons want nothing but great ſtocks to ſet up their Trades; and your daughters nothing but ſo many hundreds to prefer them to rich husbands, you are happy parents. For if that be all they want, they muſt needs be poſſeſſed of the one thing neceſſary, of that better part which *Mary* choſe for her

ſelf, that can never be taken away from them. If ſo, though your affliction be great, yet the mercy ſhewed you in reference to them, is ſo much greater, that it is a ſhame for you to make any great complaint. But if you ſay that your children are ſome of them ſtark naught, manifeſtly in the gall of bitterneſs, and band of iniquity; others of them towardly, yet but ſlenderly hopeful for matter of grace: I am ſure by your own confeſſion there is ſomething incomparablie more needful than ſtocks and portions to be ſought out for them, as to which you may take as effectual a care, and make as ſufficient a proviſion (all your loſſes notwithſtanding) as if no ſuch thing had ever befallen you. And what is it, but that your children may become wiſe unto ſalvation, that they may *know the God of their fathers, and may ſerve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind*, as *David* exhorteth *Salomon*, 1 *Chron.* 28 9. That the diſobedient may be reduced to the wiſdom of the juſt, that they may be born again, and may be found in *Chriſt*, having the righteouſneſs of God, which is by faith: In a word, that they may attain that holineſs, without which no man ſhall ſee the Lord. For this care God commends *Abraham*, *Gen.* 18. 19. *I know Abraham, that he will command his children, and his houſhold after him, and they ſhall keep the way of the Lord, &c.* As for giving your younger children high and genteele breeding: may not that be ſpared? if God hath taken away the eſtates you had provided for them, what would ſuch breeding do, but raiſe their ſpirits above what their condition is like to be, as the caſe now ſtands?

and

and may not a plainer education better fit them for that course of life, to which the providence of God is like to call them? As for your elder children, either they are those bad ones you speak of, those Children of *Belial*, and why should you covet great estates for them? would they not consume them upon their lusts? would not the prosperity of such fooles slay them? (as it hath done many others) and would not all those great things be converted by them either into the lusts of the flesh, or the lust of the eye, or the pride of life? As for those of your children that are now towardly, but not religious; either they will come to have grace in time, or not: If not, there will be a smaller accompt to give for a small estate, than for a great one, and it may be less of a snare in it; but on the other hand, if God shall first or last bestow his saving grace, either on your children that are meerly civil, or on them that are prophane, or on both, trouble not your heads any further about them, godliness hath the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come: God will withhold no good thing from them that do, or shall walk uprightly before him, *Psal.* 84.

Now from these premises, how naturally may we infer, that the great care that is incumbent upon Parents, is, that their children may come to be truly gracious. Grace without estates will certainly make them, (though an estate with grace, like an inheritance with wisdome, would add something to them for the present) but an estate without grace would probably undo them; or if not be their very undoing, yet would aggravate their condemnation very much.

It

It may be your childrens advantage, that you are sensible, that if God be not their portion, they will have none at all, (or very little) because otherwise it may be you had intrusted them with the World, and never lookt after an interest in God for them. That your children may be seasoned with Grace, if you educate them by a *proxy*, let me advise you to make choice of those that will truly concern themselves for the good of their souls, and as much to breed them christians as scholars; and make it your earnest request to them so to do. Having committed them to the tuition of those that are pious and prudent, by no meanes conjure them (as some fond Parents have done) alwayes to spare the Rod, lest they spoile the Childe. Wheresoever you send them, let your earnest prayers daily follow them: and for this above all things, that God would write his Law in their hearts, and put his fear into them, that they may never depart from him. If you train them up at home, bring them betimes acquainted with the holy Scriptures (which *Timothy* is said to have been instructed in from a Childe) also with the Grounds and Principles of Religion, that they may understand both Scripture and Sermons: be droping wholsome counsel into them ever and anon; be possessing them with the danger of sin, the excellency of holiness, the necessity of being new creatures, the doctrines of heaven and hell, and such like great truths; fill their memories with such passages of Scripture as do most concern them, which may both direct their practise, and keep out bad thoughts; Discountenance all the manifest sin you see by them, as lying, filthy speak-

eaking, pride, envy, passion, stubbornness, and
h like: and encourage all the good you see
them, and reward them for it, speak to them
rmly and affectionately of the matters of re-
gion, that they may see you are in good earnest.
eep no servants that may debauch them, but
ch as are honestly inclined, and will help them
Religion, rather than hinder them. See they
et no haunt of ill company. Conceale your
wn infirmities from them all you can, (*Debetur*
puris Reverentia) that they may not copy them
ut. Let what concerns the souls of your chil-
ren receive a sanction from both Parents: and
o make it more forcible, let one Parent if pre-
ent, alwayes second the other, as to those mat-
ers. Let them every day, that you are with
hem, hear more or less from you concerning
God. Whet the Virals of Religion upon them,
rather than inable them to tell you who was
uch a ones Father, or how long such a Patriarch
ived. Remember them daily and fervently
both in your Families and Closets. Bewail their
ins next your own, and beg pardon for them.
Not only pray for them your selves, but beſpeak
the prayers of others, together with your own
for them, and take that for one of the greatest
kindnesses that can be done for you. Principle
them against the most dangerous errours of the
times and places they live in: (as Popery where
that spreads, &c.) Intice them to be much in
reading good books, and for that end furnish
them with those that are pleasant, as well as
profitable. Acquaint them with signal passages
of divine providence, thereby to breed in them
awfull apprehensions of God, as the *Jewes* were
com-

commanded to tell their children the reason of the Passeover, *Exod.* 12. 26. Verse them in the History of Martyrs, which may shew them the faith and patience of the Saints, and acquaint them with the doctrine of the cross. Keep them alwayes in action, to prevent the mischiefes that come by idleness. Get Masters for them as soon as they are fit to go out, and before they grow too sturdy to bear the Yoak, or make them so subject and serviceable, in their nonage, in your own houses, that they may discern no great difference betwixt home and an Apprentiship, or betwixt a Fathers and a Masters house. Breed them rather beneathe, than above what you can do for them: use them to be contented with any thing that is fitting, for matter of cloaths & diet. Let morning and evening be (as it were) your medicinal times, in which to give them something for their souls health, next their heart in a morning, next their rest at night. Be ever and anon physicking them for wormes, that is, take heed of suffering them to be humoursome, troublesome, and hard to please. Make them pay respect to your persons, that they may reverence your counsel. Give them those representations of God, as may cause them as well to thirst after him, to love and delight in him, as to fear and stand in awe of him: and those characters of Religion, as may cause them to look upon all its ways as pleasantness, & all its paths as peace, as an easie Yoak and a light burthen. Teach them to be humble, and then God will teach them, *Psal.* 25. 9. Sin as little as may be for their sakes, as well as your own, lest God should *lay up your iniquity for your children, as it is, Job* 21. 19. And

whereas

whereas in many things we do all offend, begge we earneſtly of God that our Children may fare the better for our prayers, and not the worſe for our ſins.

And now Lord that I have been writing what Parents ſhould do for their Children's ſouls, I dare not ſay with that young man in the Goſpel, all theſe things have I done; but only that all theſe things I deſire to do, for, and in reference to my Children, by the aſſiſtance of thy grace. As *Peter* ſaid to *Chriſt*, Lord thou knoweſt I love thee, ſo can I appeale and ſay? Lord thou knoweſt I love my Children's ſouls, and am more tranſported with deſires it might be well with them, than that they might proſper upon all other accounts. The only riches that I inſiſt upon for them, (and Lord turn not away that prayer of thy ſervant, which comes ſwiming to thee in melting teares, and may it alſo in the blood of thy Son) I ſay Lord, the only riches I inſiſt upon for my children (whatever others do for theirs) is, that they may be *rich in faith, and heires of the Kingdome, which thou haſt promiſed to them that love thee*, *James* 2. 5.

DISCOURSE XIII.

Of that comfort under trouble, which may be drawn from the conſideration of Gods nature.

I Honour the wiſdome of *David*, who when God gave him his election of one evil out of three, (which he would) made choice of that which might ſeem to come more immediately from

from God, (*viz.* the Plague) saying, *Let us fall*
2 Sam. 24. 25. *now into the hand of the Lord, and let me not fall into the hand of Man,* and the reason he gives it, *because his* (that is Gods) *mercies are great* (or many.) It is a great relief in and under troubles to look upon our selves as in Gods hands, and upon the nature of that God (in whose hands we are) as far better than is the nature of any, even the best natured of men. They misconstrue *David,* that think he intimates, as if men were not alwaies in the hands of God, in every kind of affliction that befalls them (be it sword, or famine, by siege) for all he meaneth is, that as to some troubles, we do not fall into the hand of men, but of God: as namely under the plague, which is an Arrow shot from God's bow, not from Man's. Men are called *God's hand, Psal.* 17. 14. *From Men which are thy hand,* so that when under the rage of men, we are in the hand of God; but we may be in the hand of God and not of men. (By the way, what furious creatures are wicked men, that *David* should be more afraid of Gods punishing him by their hand, than by plague, or famine.)

That under all our troubles we are in Gods hand, is clear. Be also convinced, that that is to be in a good hand, that you are in a good hand, when in the hand of God, and that will comfort you exceedingly. If the nature and disposition of God be very good, transcendently good, that is, kind, and gracious, and mercifull, as the scripture tells us in sundry places, it is, *Exod.* 34. 6, *Nehem.* 9. 17, 31. *Jer.* 3. 12. *Joel.* 2. 13. (With an hundred more in the old Testament, besides the new) then must we needs be in a good hand when

when we are in Gods hand. Is a Childe safe in the hand of his tender mother, even when she hath a Rod in her other hand? and are not Gods Children well in the hand of their heavenly Father, who hath said to his Church, *though a Mother may forget her Childe, yet will not I forget thee, Isa.* 49. 15. *I have graven thee upon the palmes of my hands, &c.* Methinks that heathen *Poet* spake divinely, who speaking of the love of God to man, (understand him but of good men, if of a love of complacency; but of others also, if of a love of benevolence) *Charior est illis homo quam sibi.* Man is more dear to them, meaning to the Gods, (which plural number is the only thing in that saying, that discovers the Author to have been a heathen, and not an eminent Christian) than he is to himself: or God hath more love for men, than they have for themselves. That text, *Heb.* 10. 31. *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God*; if rightly understood, no wayes contradicteth what I have said: for it is meant of so falling into the hands of God, as they must do, who *have trodden under foot the Son of God, counted his blood an unholy thing, and done despight to the Spirit of Grace, vers.* 29. for that is to fall, not under the meer correcting, but the revenging and consuming hand of God, as he hath said, *vengeance is his, vers.* 30. he will pour out fiery indignation upon the adversaries, *v.* 27. meaning such Apostates as after illumination turn enemies to Christ and his truth. But what is that to others? It is ill for the rejecters and opposers of Christ, to fall into the hand of God. God out of *Christ*, especially to them that set themselves against *Christ*, is wrath. But it is terrible

terrible. But it is well for the accepters and receivers of *Christ*, to fall into Gods hand, for God in and thorough *Christ* is unspeakably gracious.

He is partly an Infidel that would have more assurance of the sweet nature and disposition of God, than Scripture and experience; but if the weakness of such men may be condiscended to, I can presently call in sound reason for a witness. Who shed abroad all that love and kindness, and compassion, and tenderness in the hearts of men and women, fathers and mothers, that is there found? who taught men to know that love, and pitty, and mercy, are real excellencies and perfections: but hatred and cruelty are odious and detestable things, the fruits of sin and weakness? that what we call good nature doth as much excell that we call ill nature, as light doth excell darkness? who hath given us to understand, that to do good, and to shew mercy, are sacrifices acceptable to God; but fury and violence his soul hateth. Hath not God himself taught us these things, and is it not therefore, that the *Gentiles* are said to *do by nature the things of the Law*? and that, *they that have not the Law, are a Law to themselves, and do shew the work of the Law written in their hearts*, *Rom.* 1. Is it not because love and mercy are agreeable to Gods nature (the Scripture saith, *God is love*) that he hath commended them to us, and made us to see a beauty in them, and to apprehend that God is therewithall delighted, and that with the merciful, he will shew himself merciful? Is it not therefore, that God hath called his mercy his glory, and told us that *mercy rejoyceth against judgment*

judgment, *James* 2. 13. Much of our disquietment under affliction proceedeth from misconceivings of God's nature, and of his heart towards us, and for that we think we see a sword in the hand of an enemy, when it is only a Rod in the hand of a father. Therefore it is excellent advice, that we should acquaint our selves with God in order to being at peace, *Job* 22.21.

O Lord I know it is necessary I should be sometimes chastned, and better by thy hand than by any other. Thou knowest how to do it in mercy and in measure: Parents may correct their children for their pleasure; but thou chastnest thine for their profit, I shall count my losses a fruit of thy love, if thou wilt but tell me that I am therefore chastned of the Lord, that I may not be condemned with the World.

DISCOURSE. XIV.

Of drawing the Waters of Comfort under affliction, out of the Wells of Gods Promises.

AS full of love and goodness as the nature of God is, yet guilty Man is loath to lie at pure mercy, and to stand to Gods meer courtesie, therefore in *Heb* 6. 18. we read of a further provision which God hath made for the comfort of his people, *viz.* by his promise and oath, both vouchsafed to *Abraham*, *Gen.* 22. 16. (and to other believers in and with him) *that by those two immutable things, the heires of promise might have strong consolation.* The end of divine promises is, that God who was and had been other-

wise free to do or not to do such good things for us, might (as it were) enter into bond, (which he could no otherwise do) and might give us the security of his truth and faithfulness, as well as that other of his mercy and goodness. God knowing that we could no waies bind him, that is, oblige him in point of justice, or as indispensible objects of his mercy (which in our selves we were not) to show kindness to us, hath bound himself by his own voluntary promises, and engaged his truth (which cannot faile) on behalf of his power and wisdome, and other attributes, that they shall be so and so imploied for us, which otherwise we could at most but have hoped, but may be now assured of, as we are, that it is impossible for God to lie. Now, as there are promises for divers other purposes; so not a few to support and comfort us under various sufferings and afflictions.

I may recite but the heads of promises, relateing to adversity, and it may be not all of them neither. There are promises of God's supporting his people under affliction, sanctifying it to them: vouchsafing them his gracious presence in it; and delivering them out of it in due time. And what more can we desire, than to be seasonably delivered out of trouble, and mean time to be upheld in it, bettered by it, and to have God with us, as he was with the three Children in the fiery Furnace. I shall quote but a few promises of this nature, and the rather because they deserve to want comfort, who wil not search the Scripture for it, that thorough patience and comfort of the Scripture they might have hope. If men had no Bibles, nor could come by none.

I would not do them that wrong, as to faile of quoting any one such promise, that I could call to mind: but now one instance of each sort may serve the turn. As for the promise of support under affliction; it is as plain as words can make it, in 1 *Cor.* 10. 13. *God is faithfull, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able, but will with the temptation make a way to escape: that you may be able to bear it.* Then, as for the presence of God with his people in their afflictions, read *Isa.* 43. 2. *When thou passest thorough the waters, I will be with thee, &c.* And *Heb.* 13. 5. *He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.* That their afflictions shall be sanctified, is secured to Gods people by those words, *Rom.* 8. 28. *We know that all things work together for good to them that love God.* And *lastly*, as for deliverance out of trouble, (which some do, but ought not most of all to thirst after) there are many texts, that give us to expect it, as namely, *Psal.* 103. 9. *The Lord will not alwayes chide, neither will he keep his anger for ever. Lam.* 3. 31, 32. *The Lord will not cast off for ever, but though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion, according to the multitude of his mercies. Isa.* 57. 16. *I will not contend for ever, neither will I be alwayes wrath, for the spirit should faile before me, and the souls which I have made.* God, who is conscious to himself that he cannot lie, may well expect that these, and many more promises of like nature, which he hath made, should contribute much to our support and comfort, sith each of them would do so, if stedfastly believed.

O Lord here are many deep Wells of living water, let me not want the bucket of faith to

draw out of them. Could I but as ſtedfaſtly believe them, as thou wilt certainly perform them, to them that do, would not my ſoul be refreſhed with ſuch promiſes well nigh as much, as it could well be with their reſpective performances. Performances may be ſomething ſweeter, but can be nothing ſurer than are divine promiſes.

DISCOURSE XV.

Of fetching comfort from the uſual proceedings of God, with his people, in and under affliction.

AFter all that hath been ſpoken, both from the nature and promiſes of God to comfort us, our weak faith (more ſhame for it) ſeems to implore ſome further relief from experience. Experience is a good crutch to a lame faith, which, were it otherwiſe, then lame might ſtand and walk without it. Since the *Apoſtle* tells us, that *experience worketh hope*, we will not reject its aſſiſtance. Let experience then tell us how God is wont to carry himſelf towards his people, in and under their afflictions.

Firſt, hear what the Scripture ſaith to that, *Iſaiah* 63. 9. *In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the Angel of his preſence ſaved them: in his love, and in his pitty he redeemed them, and he bare them and carried them all the dayes of old.* See alſo *Pſal.* 112. 4. *To the upright there ariſeth light in darkneſs*: Add thoſe words of God by his Prophet concerning his Church, *Hoſeah* 2. 14. *I will allure her, and bring her into the Wilderneſs, and ſpeak*

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comfortably to her. verſ. 15. *And I will give her Vineyards from thence, (viz.* from the Wilderneſs) *and the Valley of Acor* (which ſignifies trouble) *for a door of hope, and ſhe ſhall ſing there as in the dayes of her youth, and as in the day when ſhe came up from Egypt.* And 2 *Cor.* 1. 5. *Bleſſed be God who comforteth us in all our tribulation: For as the ſufferings of Chriſt abound in us, ſo our conſolation alſo aboundeth by Chriſt.* 2 *Cor.* 8. 2. *Speaking of the Churches of Macedonia,* he ſaith, that in a great trial of affliction, *the abundance of their joy abounded, to the riches of their liberality,* and 1 *Pet.* 4. 14. *If ye be reproached for the name of Chriſt, happy are ye, for the ſpirit of glory reſteth on you.* What do all theſe paſſages ſeem to imply, but that *God* is wont to reſerve the ſtrongeſt cordials, (I mean comforts) for his people, to the time of their deepeſt ſufferings? *Job* 22. 29. *When Men are caſt down, then thou ſhalt ſay there is lifting up, and he ſhall ſave the humble perſon.* As our greateſt elevations do uſually precede our greateſt temptations and deſertions, (as *Paul* his rapture into the third heaven, was not long before his being buffeted: and *Chriſt* himſelf had received his baptiſme, and been honoured by a voice from Heaven, not long before he was led into the Wilderneſs to be tempted) ſo our greateſt temptations and dejections are uſually ſucceeded by our greateſt elevations and comforts. So it was with *Chriſt* after he had been tempted; *Angels came and miniſtred to him.* When *Chriſt* was either in his agony, or neer unto it, we read in *Luke* 22. 49. *That there appeared an Angel to him, ſtrengthning him.* If then it be true in a ſpiritual, as well as in a natural ſenſe, that it is

usually most dark, but a little before break of day, and that the bright face of heaven is better discerned under ground than above, (where the reflection of beames dazleth our eyes) and if it be so, that when the Bricks are doubled, than God useth to send *Moses* (that is deliverance) if God never speak more kindly to his people then he useth to do, when he hath drawn them into a Wilderness; if God smile upon his people then, especially when the World frowns upon them; and when their outward sufferings abound, cause their inward consolations to do so likewise, and make light arise to them in darkness: why should I not then say, as *David* did, *Psal.* 49. 5. *Wherefore should I fear in the dayes of evil, when the iniquity of my heels shall compass me about?* (supposing him to mean the punishment or fruit of his iniquities) Mich. 7. 8. If *when I sit in darkness, the Lord will be a light to me*; if when I have more trouble in the World, I may have more peace in *Christ*; if I be in a Prison, and God will there give me Songs in the night, as he did to *Paul* and *Silas*, *Acts* 16. if I were at a stake, and might there feel greater joyes in my soul, than ever I was acquainted with before, (as some holy *Martyrs did*) who could say I were miserable, and not do me wrong? or how could I possibly think my self so to be?

Psal. 23. 4. Lord, *though I walk thorough the valley of the shadow of death, yet will I fear no evil*, if thou wilt be with me, and wilt cause thy Rod and thy Staff to comfort me. Though *deep call upon deep at the noise of thy Water-spouts*, and though *all thy waves and thy billowes are gone over me*. Yet if thou Lord wilt command thy loving kindness in the

day

day time, and cause thy Songs to be with me in the night, I will not fear, though an Host of evils should encamp against me. *Psal.* 142. 8.

DISCOURSE XVI.

Of that relief and support which the commonness of the Case of affliction may afford us.

IT is a sign that *Men walk in a vain shew* (as the Scripture speaks, *Psal.* 39. 6.) for that they are apt to be disquieted at those things which should comfort them. (so was *Peter* at the approach of *Christ*, crying out, depart from me O Lord) and on the other hand, to be comforted with those things which one would think would rather disquiet them, as namely with others being under the same, or other as great calamities as themselves. *Solamen miseris socios habuisse doloris.* Though we may not say, the more (in sufferings together) the merrier, yet according to the course of men so it is, that the more fellow-sufferers, the less sad are they that suffer. Neither may we impute this wholly to the weakness and envi- usness of men, sith the *Apostle* from that very consideration, doth labour to comfort Christians, 1 *Cor.* 10. 13. *No temptation hath take you but what is common to men*: and in 1 *Pet.* 5. 9. *The same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren, that are in the World.* Therefore doubtless there is some reason why men should not be so much dejected, when they consider themselves not to be alone in misery, (though upon other accompts again we should be never

leſs ſad and ſolitary, than when none are in trouble but our ſelves) then if they were as *David* ſpeaks of himſelf, *Pſal.* 102. 7. *Like a Sparrow alone upon the Houſe top, or like a Pellican in the wilderneſs, or like an Owle in the Deſart.* For in that caſe we might be apt to think that God had ſome particular controverſie with us more than with all other men, that he had ſingled us out to make examples of us, that he had ſet us like beacons upon a hill to warn and alarm others, or that our ſufferings were ſuch as could not be borne, becauſe we have no inſtances of thoſe that do or ever did bear the like.

Now the commonneſs of ſufferings, and thoſe of the ſame kind to others with our ſelves, doth much take off from all thoſe ſuſpicions and prejudices, eſpecially if they be ſuch as we doubt not, but have intereſt in the love and favour of God, for thence may we conclude that hatred is not to be known by ſuch diſpenſations as thoſe. Afflictions in one kind or other are common to men, yea to good men, or the generality of them at all times; but ſome have them in one way, ſome in another, ſome in body, ſome in minde, ſome in eſtate, ſome in relations, ſome in all; but all in ſome. For Man is born to ſorrow, as the ſparks flie upward, and whomſoever God loves, he rebukes and chaſtneth, yea every ſon whom he receiveth: but there are times in which the afflictions of many are inviſible, only their own hearts know their own ſorrow, and wherein they are ſo various, that as we ſay, *ſo many Men ſo many mindes*, ſo may it almoſt be ſaid, ſo many men, ſo many ſeveral ſorts of miſeries, and uſually every one thinks his own

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the greateſt, and is ready to ſay, Is there any ſorrow like to mine.

But it is otherwiſe at this day, God having caſt multitudes both of perſons and families at one and the ſame time into one and the ſame furnace, that none might ſay, others were corrected but with rods, but we with ſcorpions. Now this being ſo, there are the more to pitty you, the fewer to inſult over you: though when all this is ſaid, I honour them that ſay from their hearts, They wiſh they had ſuffered more than they did (if more could have been) if it had been the will of God that none might have been ſufferers but they. But ſeeing ſuch was the good will and pleaſure of God, that thouſands ſhould be involved in the ſame calamity with our ſelves, and many of them our betters: who is not aſhamed, yea who is not afraid to contend with God for what hath befallen himſelf? who ſeeth not reaſon to ſtand before God like a ſheep dumb before the ſhearer? Who would not lay his mouth in the duſt if there may yet be hope? What art thou, and what was thy fathers houſe, that the deſtroying Angel ſhall paſſe over thee, and thy doors be as it were ſprinkled, when he entred into the houſes of ſo many, not only *Egyptians* but *Iſraelites?* If our betters have been equal ſharers in this calamity (as who is ſo proud as not to think ſo) how can we but think of thoſe words, *Jer.* 49. 12. *Behold they whoſe judgment was not to drink of the cup, have drunken, and art thou he that ſhalt altogether go unpuniſhed?* To have eſcaped had been a miracle of mercy: but to have been involved with ſo many that deſerved it leſs, was no wonder at all.

Lord,

Lord, as for all those whose houses and substance this Fire hath consumed, give them much more to admire that their persons did escape the common calamity of the Plague, than that their possessions were taken away by the common calamity of the Fire: and as for those who have escaped both Plague and Fire (they and their dwellings) let them be ravished with the remembrance of thy distinguishing goodness, and so answer the law of thy kindness, that thou maist not reserve them to a greater judgment than either that of the Plague, or that other of the late dismall Fire.

DISCOURSE XVII.

Of the lightness of all temporal afflictions.

IT is well I have Scripture to back me, else I foresee I might possibly have been esteemed both hard-hearted and heretical, for saying that all temporal afflictions are but light: Whereas some would oppose their experience to such an assertion, I may comply with that, and yet do the Scripture right. All your experience can contend for, is only this, that some temporal afflictions (and this in particular) absolutely and in themselves considered, are not light, but heavie (as *Job* speaks) *like the sands of the sea.* That I can afford to grant; but yet those very afflictions relatively considered, and compared with miseries of another nature: namely, with internal and eternal torments, give me leave to say are but as so many flea-bitings. Say who dare

dare that utmoſt poverty is comparable either to the pains of hell, or pangs of conſcience. Who is ſo deſperate as to be willing to exchange meer beggery or famine its ſelf, with either of thoſe? Doth not *Salomon* ſay, and is it not moſt true, That the *ſpirit* (meaning the conſcience) *of a man* (if that be ſound and in peace) *can bear his infirmities, but a wounded ſpirit who can bear?* That is, none can bear. If *Job* ſitting upon the dunghill, can then and there ſay, he knows that his redeemer liveth, and he ſhall one day ſee him with theſe eyes; he that thinks him half ſo miſerable whilſt he can ſo ſay, as one that ſits upon a throne, and mean time ſeeth the hand-writing of God upon the wall, (as *Belteſhazzar* did) telling him that he is weighed and found too light: or cries out with *Spira* and others in the like caſe, that he is damned, he is damned; or but as *David* ſometimes did, that God hath forgotten to be gracious to him, and ſhut up his loving kindneſs towards him in diſpleaſure; I ſay, he that thinks the latter of theſe, though upon a Throne, the leſs miſerable of the two, knows not what he ſaith, nor whereof he affirms. Should he be tranſlated from a dunghill to a throne with ſuch different circumſtances as theſe, oh how would he long to be upon his dunghill again, with ſuch language in his mouth and heart, as was that of *Job*, I know my redeemer lives?

If thy affliction be but temporal and external, fear to ſay, no ſorrow like to thine, no not that of a wounded conſcience; leſt God hear it and be angry, and ſhould either exchange thy other miſery for a wounded conſcience, or add

that

that to all the reſt, that by woful experience thou maiſt learn, neither to overvalue the one, nor to undervalue the other. And do the pangs of a wounded conſcience far exceed the miſeries of an impoveriſhed condition, what then do the pains of hell, which far exceed the pangs of conſcience? The worm that never dies (by which is meant a gnawing conſcience) is but one part of the torments of hell. Beſides that, there is the lake that burneth with fire and brimſtone; the ſmoak whereof aſcendeth continually. What is it to have fire conſume our dwellings, in compariſon of dwelling our ſelves with conſuming fire, and with everlaſting burnings? who believes hell to be what it is, and doth not think one year or moneth in the torments of that place, to be more unſufferable than all the vexations of a long and afflicted life; were it not leſs miſery to be as *Lazarus*, that beggar, full of ſores, and craving of the crumbs that fell from the rich mans table, and glad of dogs to lick his ſores, yea to be ſo for many years together, than for the ſpace of one year to be as *Dives* in hell, earneſtly begging for a little water to cool his tongue, tormented in flames, and could by no means obtain it? Add the circumſtance of eternity to the greatneſs of hell torments, and ſee if all the troubles of this life do not even vaniſh before it, and appear as nothing. If then thou art convinced (as I hope thou art) there is a hell, and haſt reaſon to believe that multitudes are there (for all are there that have lived and died in their ſins) let me ſuppoſe thee the greateſt ſufferer this fire hath made (if there be any one greater than any of the

the reſt) and when that is done, compare thy condition with that of the damned in hell, and then ſay, if thy affliction when laid in the ballance, be not found altogether lighter than vanity. If God will aſſure thee that thou ſhalt flie from the wrath to come, all that hath yet befaln thee may be born.

It is not for want of pitty and commiſeration towards you, that I write this (I hope my bowels yearn towards you) but I would juſtifie the Scripture, when it ſaith, that temporal afflictions are but light. 2 *Cor.* 4.17. *Our light affliction* (ſaith *Paul*) *which is but for a moment*, &c. Read but St. *Pauls* perils, 2 *Cor.* 11. 26,27. and his ſufferings, *v.* 23. *In ſtripes above meaſure, in priſons more frequent, in deaths oft, thrice ſtoned*, &c. and then tell me, if his temporal afflictions were light, whoſe can be called heavie? Add to what I have ſaid, that the pangs of conſcience, and the pains of hell (which I have made appear, do ſo infinitely outweigh all the troubles of this life) are no other than what our ſins have deſerved, and therefore our outward afflictions may be ſaid to be light, not only if compar'd with what is come upon others, but alſo with what might juſtly have been inflicted upon our ſelves. So that we may here take up thoſe words of *Ezra, chap.* 9.13. *Thou Lord haſt puniſhed us leſs than our iniquities deſerve.* If one that deſerves to be put to a painful and ſhameleſs death, comes off with a burn in the hand, who ſaith not his puniſhment is light, compared with his offence? I am deceived if by this time I have not plainly proved all temporal afflictions to be but light, though ſome are nothing like ſo light as others.

Now

Now Lord, what I have proved by Scriptural arguments, let not me or others ever seem to disprove by anti-scriptural practices, whilst we affirm Temporal afflictions to be but light, let us not groan under them as if they were unsupportable, or to be overwhelmed by them. Oh mix not Spiritual afflictions with temporal. If thou wilt rebuke me, seem not to do it in thy wrath, neither chasten me in thy sore displeasure. Let me read thy love in and with my temporal afflictions, and I shall ever acknowledge that in comparison, not only of eternal torments, but even of inward and spiritual troubles, they are but light.

DISCOURSE XVIII.

Of the shortness of Temporal Afflictions.

THough afflictions be not sweet in themselves, yet it is one comfort, they are but short: And how can the troubles of this life be otherwise than short, when this life it self is not long? *Paul* exhorting Christians to weep as if they wept not, 1 *Cor.*7.29. promiseth this, *Brethren the time is short*, *v.*28. and to shew the exceeding shortness of it, he calls it a moment, 2 *Cor.*4.17. *Our affliction which is but for a moment.* Persons under affliction are apt to think the time long: as those that are in great pain, be it but for a day, or a piece of a day. In the morning they cry, *Would to God it were evening*, *Deut.*28.67. *and in the evening, would to God it were morning.* They are ready to expostulate with the

the Sun, saying, why stay the wheels of his chariot so long, though he be as a mighty giant that runs a race. They would make morning and evening meet (if they knew how) and have it night so soon as it is day, and day again so soon as it is night. But is time long because men think it so? is a Summer-day short, because they that spend it in pleasure think it is night quickly, and wish it were twice so long? shall we say the time is long, when God saith it is short? Let God be true, and ever man a liar. We our selves shall say the same thing, if we compare time with eternity, as the *Apostle* did when he said, *Our affliction which is but for a moment, is not worthy to be compared with the eternal weight of glory.* A thousand years with God (because eternal) are but as one day, or as a watch in the night: what then is fourscore years which few exceed, yea few arrive to? There are eternal sufferings, how long are they? and how short are these if compared with them? If our miseries may end with our lives, we shall have no cause to complain they have been long. God hath made our daies as a span, and our years are as nothing before him. Why should we think that we are long deprived of those things that we could not have long enjoyed? Do not persons that have the world at will bemoan themselves to think how soon their souls will be required of them, and then whose all these things will be? Had the City been standing, had trade been flourishing, had waters of a full cup been wrung out to you, and had God given you a lease of all that mercy during life, how soon would that life expire? how soon must you be

gathe-

gathered to your fathers, and go the way of all flesh? how close doth eternity follow you at the heeles? how suddenly will it swallow you up? They that had but a little time to come in their leases, and no hopes of renewing them, count not their loss so great. Thou hast but a little time to come in thy life, which is without hope of being renewed, and therefore what great matter is it that thou hast lost? within a few years they that have great estates yet left, will enjoy no more of them than thou dost of thine, which the fire hath consumed. Is it an eternity of happiness that thou believest to be reserved for thee; wait but a little while, and thou wilt be in possession of it, and then thou wilt have no more need of those things.

O Lord, I shall not presume to ask how many daies, or moneths, or years, my sufferings must last, or whether all the residue of my life: only be pleased to say, that they shall be but temporal; then shall I thankfully acknowledge that the sufferings of Time are mercifully short, if compared with the joyes of eternity.

DISCOURSE XIX.

Of the needfulness and usefulness of Affliction.

WE commonly say, that a rod now and then is as good for children as their meat, and God knows that it is so for his; should he spare his rod, and should his soul spare them for their crying, he should spoil his children.

1 *Pet.*

1 *Pet.* 1. 6. *For a ſeaſon* (*if need be*) *ye are in heavineſs.* If God do not correct us for his own pleaſure (as it is certain he doth not; for judgment is his ſtrange act, neither doth he willingly afflict the children of men) then ſurely it is for our profit. We read in *Pſa.* 55. 19. *Becauſe men have no changes* (*viz.* from proſperity to adverſity, but the mountain of their happineſs ſtands ſtrong) *therefore they fear not God.* And another Text ſaith, *Put them in fear, that they may know themſelves to be but men.* (As if men, but for Gods terrifying them by affliction, would conceit themſelves to be more than men.) It is rendered as a reaſon why the *Moabites* were ſo wicked, becauſe they had no affliction (at leaſtwiſe of a long time.) *Jer.* 48. 11. *Moab hath been at eaſe from his youth, and he hath ſetled on his lees, and hath not been emptied from veſſel to veſſel, neither hath he gone into captivity: therefore his taſte remained in him, and his ſent is not changed:* *Agur* gives this reaſon why he prayed againſt riches, *Prov.* 30. 9. *Leſt I be full and deny thee, and ſay who is the Lord?* *David* himſelf ſaith, *Pſal.* 119. 67. *Before I was afflicted I went aſtray, but now have I kept thy word.* Believe theſe paſſages of Scripture, and judge afflictions needleſs if you can. Wind, (to which actions may be compared) may do ſome hurt; but if there were no winds the aire would putrifie, and there would be no living in it. Standing waters, as ſome moats and lakes, and ſuch like (to which perſons alwaies in proſperity may be compared) how unwholſome and unuſeful are they? As it is neceſſary that the Sea (and ſome other waters) ſhould ebbe as well as flow, and that the

Moon should sometimes decrease, or wane, as well as wax and increase at other times: so for us to have our ebbs as well as our tides, our wanes as well as our waxings.

It is a hard thought of God, that he should make us drink bitter and loathsome potions, when we need them not. We cannot finde in our hearts to use our children so, nor yet to correct them (so much as gently) when we think there is no occasion for it. Oh that we should think more meanly of God than of our selves; or more highly of our selves than of the great and ever blessed God. Do we hear him crying out, *Hos.* 11. 8. *How shall I deliver thee O Ephraim, how shall I make thee as Admah, and Zeboim, my heart is turned within me, &c.* And shall we think he will do such things where there is no need? Take heed of charging God with hypocrisie, who is truth it self. Far be it from us to say, Afflictions are not needful, because our partial selves do not see how needful they are. When will our children confess that they want whipping? spare them till then, and you shall never correct them. Had *Paul* no need (yea he saith he had) of a messenger of Sathan to buffet him, lest he should be lifted up with the abundance of revelations? we have not his revelations, yet are we not as proud as he either was, or was in danger to have been? Some humble servants of God have said they never had that affliction in all their lives which they did not first or last finde they had need of. He that wants no correction is better than any of those worthies we read of in Scripture; and he that thinks himself so, I am sure hath need of it to

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humble him. Read the *third chapter*, and ſee how many leſſons afflictions do teach us, and then judge if there be none of them you have yet to learn, at leaſtwiſe better and more perfectly than you have yet done. Can nothing profit us but that which pleaſeth us? Phyſicians know that bitter drinks in many caſes are more profitable (though loathſome) than thoſe which are moſt pleaſant.

O Lord, why am I ſo childiſhly averſe to that which is ſo needful for me? If thoſe to whom I commit the care of my body, do counſel me to bleed or purge, or to be cupt or ſearified, and do adviſe me to it as neceſſary for my health, I ſubmit to it, and why do I not ſubmit to thee when thou ordereſt me unpleaſant things, which yet are more needful for me? Are not froſts and nipping weather as neceſſary to kill the weeds, as warm Sunſhine to ripen the corn? *Though no chaſtening be joyous for the preſent, but grievous, yet if it worketh the peaceable fruits of righteouſneſs* (Heb. 12.11.) I deſire not only to be patient under it, but alſo thankful for it.

DISCOURSE XX.

Of the mixture of mercies with judgments.

NO man hath truly either a heaven or a hell in this world. For as all our wine here is mixt with water, ſo all our water is mixt with wine: God in this life doth ſtill in judgment remember mercy. *God hath ſet the one over againſt*

the other. Prov. 7. 14. meaning, mercy over against judgment. It is not for nothing that the *Apostle* exhorteth us, in every thing to be thankful, and saith, that is the will of God concerning us: But therefore it is, because there is a mixture of mercies with all the afflictions of this life. Some may sit in so much darkness, as to see no light at all, but some light there is in their condition, only they see it not. Our late Fire was as great a temporal judgment as most have been, yet he seeth nothing that discerns not a mixture of mercy with it. Was it not great mercy that when God burnt the City, yet he spared the Suburbs? that when mens houses were consumed, yet their persons were delivered, yea and much of their goods and substance was snatched as a firebrand out of the fire? your flight was on the Sabbath-day: but it was not in the winter, in which the shortness of daies, and badness of the waies had scarce permitted you to have conveied away the one half of what you did, not only by day, but by night. It was no small mercy that the Plague was gone before the Fire came. For had it been otherwise, who that fled into the Countrey to save his life, durst have come into the City to have saved his goods? Yea were not many fled so far from the face of that destroying Angel, that they could not have returned till it had been too late? Would the Countrey-men have brought their Carts and ventured their persons if the plague had still been raging? Where could you have bestowed your goods, yea where could you have bestowed your selves if the pestilence had bin then amongst you? who would have received them? yea who would

would have received you, if you had come from thence. The City could not dread the fire more than the Countrey would have done the peſtilence, and ſuch as had come from the place where it was. So far would they have been from putting your goods into their houſes, that they would not have received your perſons into their barns and ſtables; which in the height of the plague they refuſed to do. When the fire burnt your City, there was no more it could do; but had an invading enemy ſet the City on fire, would they not alſo have rifled your goods, raviſhed your wives, deflowred your daughters, and put your ſelves to the ſword? Was it no mercy that God by ſparing a remnant of the City, kept it from being like to *Sodom* and to *Gomorrah*? that there is ſomething left, out of which to make a little of every thing? Some places for aſſemblies yet to worſhip God in; ſome for Magiſtrates to diſpence juſtice in, ſome for Merchants and traders to meet and hold commerce in, ſome houſes for perſons yet to dwell in, who cannot conveniently dwell any where elſe, though now men crowd together as in the winter-time three or four might do into one bed, or the moſt in a family into ſome little warm parlour, which in the heat of weather had wont to keep in ſpacious rooms.

Archimedes had wont to ſay, Give him but a place to ſtand, in the mean time, & he would turn the world round. You want not a place to ſtand in, if that may enable you to turn and wind the world. If then our condition be not all miſery, why ſhould our poſture be all mourning? If

we receive good things at the hands of God, why ſhould we not alſo receive evil? Children can brook correction from their parents, becauſe they have all things elſe from them. Out of the mouth of the moſt high proceedeth not good, as well as evil? Is it God that taketh away, and is it not God that leaves alſo? *Job* 2. 10. and ſhould we not therefore bleſs the name of the Lord? Doth God create darkneſs, and doth he not form light alſo? *Iſa.* 45. 7. See how God makes the ſcales to play one againſt another; judgment in the one, mercy in the other, that it is hard to ſay which weighs heavieſt. Is it not of the Lords mercies that we are not utterly conſumed, becauſe his compaſſions fail not? Are we ſtung with the fiery ſerpents of miſery, & may we not receive ſome cure by looking up to the brazen ſerpents of mercy? (if I may ſo call them.) How can we chuſe but call to mind thoſe words of God by his Prophet? *I will correct thee in meaſure, yet will I not make a full end of thee.* *Jer.* 30. 11.

O Lord, if thou hadſt mixed no mercy with our miſery, what could we do more than utterly deſpond and caſt away all our hopes and comfort? Thou haſt mixed thy diſpenſations, let us alſo mixe our affections: hope with our fear, rejoycing with our trembling, thankſgiving with our lamentations. *There is hope of a tree if it be cut down, that it will ſprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not ceaſe, if the root thereof be yet in the earth, and the ſtock thereof in the ground.* *Job* 14. 7. *Through the ſent of water it will bud and bring forth boughs like a plant.* *v.* 9. *Thou haſt left us a remnant to eſcape, and gi-*

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ven as a nail in the place of the great City, that the Lord might lighten our eyes and give us a little reviving in our troubles. Thou hast said concerning *London*, as thou spakest to *Daniel* in vision, *Dan.* 4.14. *Hew down the tree, cut off its branches, shake off his leaves, and scatter his fruit, &c. nevertheless leave the stump of its root in the earth, and let it be wet with the dew of Heaven, &c. Lord* I desire much more to wonder that any thing of *London* is left, than that the greatest part of it is consumed.

DISCOURSE XXI.

Of the Discommodities of Prosperity and Benefits of Affliction.

Prosperity hath its evils and inconveniences as wel as Adversity; yea deadly inconveniencies, (as some use that *Epithite*) For saith *Salomon, Prov.* 1.32. *The prosperity of fools shall destroy them.* And in *Eccles.* 5.13. he saith, he had *seen a sore evil under the Sun*, viz. *Riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt.* Most men are in love with prosperity, and therefore cannot or will not see the discommodities of it, as our *Proverb* saith, *Love is blinde.* But how often doth it prove a kinde of lufcious poison, which not only swels and puffs up them that have it; but also frets & eats into them (like some deadly corosive inwardly taken.) *James* speaking to those that had more wealth than they knew what to do with, saith, *The rust of their gold should eat their flesh as it*

were first. Jam. 5.5. Why went the young man from Christ so sorrowfully? Luke 18. 23. Mat. 19,22. was it not, *because he had great possessions*, as Matthew phraseth it; or as Luke, *for that he was very rich*. Thereupon saith Christ, *A rich man shall hardly enter into the Kingdom of God*, and *it is easier for a camel to go thorough the eye of a needle*; and Timothy must charge those that are rich, not to be high minded, nor yet to trust in uncertain riches, implying they are apt to both. How hard is it for those that have an arm of flesh, not to make flesh their arm, and so to incur the curse? Jer. 17.5. How hard it is to be so good a Steward of a great estate, as may enable a man to give up his account with joy? How many that have resolved to be rich (yea, and have been as good as their resolution) *have pierced themselves thorough with divers sorrows, yea been drowned in perdition*, 1 Tim. 6.9. When Jesurun waxed fat, *he kicked, he forsook God that made him, and lightly esteemed the rock of his salvation*. Deut. 32.15. What Salomon saith, Prov. 3.23,30. *Look not upon the Wine when it is red, when it giveth its colour in the cup, when it moves its self aright; at the last it biteth like a Serpent, and stingeth like an Adder*, may too often be applied to prosperity, which looks and tastes like sparkling wine, but oft times proves a stinging serpent. I doubt not but the time will come when many rich men will wish they had begd their bread, rather than to have had so heavie an account to give for abused prosperity.

Few men have received that hurt by their poverty that others have done by their plentie: as, for one that is starved to death, there are hun-

hundreds killed with surfeiting upon meates or drinks. Yea *adversity* hath its conveniencies and its good things, as well as prosperity its mixture of discommodities and evil things. As one said, *he had received some hurt by his grates* (which innate corruption had abused to pride) *and some good by his fins* (which God had taken occasion to humble him by, for so I understand him.) So have many received hurt by their prosperity, and good by their adversity: been losers by the former, been gainers by the latter. Many may take up the words of *Themistocles*, and say, *They had perished, if they had not perished.* They had been undone in one sense, if they had not been undone in another; or say as a *Philosopher*, I have read of, *They never made a better voyage than at that time when they suffered shipwrack.* *Solomon* knew what he said, *Eccles.* 7. 3. *Sorrow is better than laughter, for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better.* Sweet things are commonly known to turn to choller (which is a bitter humour) and bitter things to cleanse and sweeten the blood. If then I may be better by my affliction, and might have been worse for my prosperity; why should I think my self undone for the loss of that which might have been my undoing? why should I stand and wonder at that passage, *James* 1. 10. *Let the rich man rejoyce in that he is made low.* Had not *Manasses* more cause to bless God for those Iron fetters, wherewith he was bound by his enemies, the *Assyrians*, than for his crown of Gold, 2 *Chron.* 33. 12. *When he was in affliction, he besought the Lord, &c.* Prosperity had been his worst enemy, and afterwards affliction under God became his great-

greatest friend, did most befriend him, for it brought him home to God, and to himself. For when the Lord chastned him, then, and not till then did he open his eares, and seale his instruction. *Job* 33. 16, 19.

When I consider these things, I cannot but break out and say: Lord never restore prosperity to me, unless thou wilt give me a heart to use it, yea I rather implore affliction, (whilst need requires) so thou wilt but sanctifie it. If my dross may not otherwise be melted away, put me into thy Furnace, only when I am tried, let me come forth like gold.

DISCOURSE XXII.

Of the gracious ends and intendments of God in afflicting his people.

COuld we take any thing ill from God's hand if we did believe he meant well? would we receive with our left hand what we thought that God did offer us with his right? all those things in which God hath good ends towards us must needs end in our good; for the Almighty cannot be frustrated. Our *Proverb* saith, *All is well that ends well*, why then should we take on as if all those things were against us, which shall in the event make for us and work together for our good? Wherefore did God *lead the Israelites about in the Wilderness 40. yeares together?* was it not meerly, *to humble them and prove them, and do them good in their latter end? Deut.* 8. 2, 16. God speaking of debating with his people, *viz.*

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by correction, *Isa.* 27. 8. saith, *By this shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged, and this is all the fruit, to take away his sin*: *vers.* 9. And the *Apostle* saith *Heb.* 12. 10. That *God chastneth us for our profit, that we might be partakers of his Holiness*. To think that God would correct his children but for some good end, what is it but to think more hardly of God than we do of our selves, who use to say, but that we think it for their good, we would never strike a Childe whilst we lived, nor should it feel the weight of our finger. Is not God as unwilling to strike as you can be, if fair meanes would serve the turn? how shall I give thee up oh *Ephraim*, but either he must take such a course with us, or it will be worse for us. Even then when the meanes which God useth are the fruits of justice and displeasure, the end which he propoundeth in so doing, is the result of his mercy. Though the Husband-man break up the ground, plow upon its back, and make long furrowes, he intends no hurt, all is to prepare it for the seed. Whatsoever the face of Gods actions or actings towards his people may be, to be sure he hath alwayes good intentions as towards them, for *he is tender of them as of the apple of his eye*, *Zach.* 2. 8. And give me leave to say there is a great deale more comfort in the good meanings of God than of men; because men may meane well, when yet they may do very ill: yea that very thing which they designed for much good, may do much hurt. The *Amalekite* that told *David* he had killed *Saul*, designed to get a reward for himself, 2 *Sam.* 1. 2. but we see it cost him his life. But the designes of God cannot be defeated. *Prov.* 19. 21. *The counsell of the Lord*

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that shall stand. Job 23. 13. *He is of one mind, and who can turn him, and what his soul desireth that he doth.* It is yet a further comfort that we may not only know in the general that God intends the good of his people in afflicting them, but also in particular that he intends our good thereby.

For *first* of all, If it be so that God hath created in us hungrings and thirstings after a sanctified use of our afflictions, so that we more long to be brought out of sin by affliction, than to be brought out of affliction by deliverance: we may be confident, he that created those hungrings and thirstings after learning righteousness by the judgments that are upon us, and obedience by our sufferings, will satisfie them. *Mat.* 5. 6.

Moreover, If God hath given us a sanctified use of mercies time after time, if mercies have done us good; afflictions shall do so likewise. We sometimes give our children delightful things, only to please them: but not distastful things, unless it be to profit them; neither will God do otherwise by his children.

Again, If afflictions actually do us good, and make us better, we may be sure they were sent of God for that end and purpose: for it is not by accident, but by divine appointment that evil things should do us good; though it is true they may do us hurt thorough our own default, how be it God had made them capable of doing us good, if we had not abused them. We can bring evil out of good, and darkness out of light: but it is God only that can bring good out of evil, and light out of darkness. God sometimes sends

sends afflictions to do his enemies good, (as *Manasseh* for instance) and will he send them to do his friends hurt?

O Lord how usual is it with us to double and treble our miseries, by misinterpreting the ends of God in inflicting them, as if thou didst it only to wreak thine anger upon us, and to wreak thy wrath from heaven against us, as if thou didst whet thy glittering sword that thou mightest render vengeance, when yet *thou chastenest us only as a Man chastneth his Son*, Deut. 8. 5. how oft do we think that thou hast laid thy Axe to our Root, when it is but thy Pruning-hook to our superfluous branches: Doth it not grieve thy spirit to be thus misconstrued and hardly thought of, as it would cut us to the heart to be mistaken for enemies, when we have done and spoken as true friends? Lord open thy heart to us, as *Joseph* opened his to his brethren, when after angry looks and threatnings, he comforted them with saying, I am your brother *Joseph*, which before they knew not. Lord it shall suffice, let our troubles be what they will be, if we may but read thy love in them, and if thou wilt but say to us, as to thy people of old, *Jer.* 29. 11. *I know the thoughts that I think towards you, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.*

DISCOURSE XXIII.

Of Resignation to God, and acquiescing in his good pleasure.

HOw good is it to be willing to be at God's dispose? how meet is it to be said to God, not

not as I will, but as thou wilt? shall we pray (as *Christ* hath taught us) that the will of God may be done, and yet be impatient of Gods doing his own will? Is it fit that Gods will should take place or ours? who are we that we should set our selves to contradict and oppose the good pleasure of God, be it that our houses shall be fired, our goods burnt, our head City laid wast. Did *Abraham* withstand God when he bid him to sacrifice his dear *Isaac* (the heire of promise) with his own hand? Did he not, as to that, lie at Gods foot when he called him to it? Are we better than *Moses*, than *Aaron* the Saint of the Lord, than *David*, than *Hezekiah*, than *Job*, yea than *Christ* himself, who had all learn'd to stoop to God in very difficult cases? Can we be too good to do it, if they were not? When God told *Moses* he should go up to *Pisgah*, and take a view of *Canaan*, but that he should never enter into it, *Deut.* 3. 27. We finde not one word that he replyed, after he had once made his request, and God had said, speak no more of this matter. When God had by fire consumed *Nadab* and *Abihu*, the two Sons of *Aaron*, *Moses* did but say to him, *The Lord will be sanctified in them that come nigh to him, and be glorified before all the people, and Aaron held his peace*, *Levit.* 10. 3. When old *Eli* had received a dreadfull message from God by a Child, for so *Samuel* then was, 1 *Sam.* 3. 18. How meekly did he resent it, saying, *It is the Lord, let him do as seemeth him good.* When *David* was flying from the face of his rebellious Son *Absalom*, and taking leave of the Ark of God, 2 *Sam.* 15. 26. *If the Lord say I have no delight in thee, behold here*

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am I, let him do to me what seemeth him good? At another time, when *David* was even consumed by the blow of Gods hand, *Psal.* 39. 10. he saith, *I was dumb and opened not my mouth, because thou didst it. vers.* 9. And as for *Hezekiah*, though a King also, (as well as *David*) yet see how his spirit buckled to God, when the Prophet brought him word, that God had taken away the fee-simple of all he had from his *children, who should be Eunuches to the King of Babylon, Isa.* 39. 7. And left him but his life in it, *Good is the Word of the Lord*, (saith he) *which thou hast spoken, vers.* 8. As for *Job* who had been the greatest of all the Men of the East, when he had lost all but a vexatious Wife, prompting him to curse God, yet cried he out, *Blessed be the Name of the Lord, Job* 1. 21.

Behold a greater instance of patience and submission than any of these, both for that his person was more excellent, and his sufferings far greater, having been a Man of sorrowes all his time. *Isa.* 53. 7. *He was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth, brought as a Lamb to the slaughter, and as a Sheep before the Shearer is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. When he was reviled he reviled not again: when he suffered he threatned not, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously.* 1 *Pet.* 2. 23. Was not this written for our imitation? *vers.* 21. *Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example.* Did he, who is God equal with the father, submit even to the painfull, and shamefull, and cursed death of the cross, and shall we think our selves too good to stoop to lesser sufferings and humiliations? he that can submit to God, may be happy in any condition:

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he that cannot, will be happy in no condition this World can afford him, in which all our roſes are full of prickles, and all our wayes ſtrowed and hedged up with thornes, more or leſs. Yea not only the Church militant upon Earth, but even the Church triumphant, in heaven, could not be free from miſery, if the will of glorious Saints were not melted into the will of God. *Abraham* would be ever and anon grieving to think of *Dives* and others in his caſe, if his will were not perfectly conformed to the will of God. Many things fall out in this life, which we would not for a World ſhould be, if we could and might prevent them; but when the pleaſure of God is once declared by events, even in thoſe caſes ought we to ſit down ſatisfied. *Abraham* would not have ſacrificed *Iſaac* for the whole World, but that God made as if he would have him ſo to do, and then he yielded preſently. If blinde fortune did govern the World, whoſe heart would it not break to think of ſo famous a City in a few dayes laid in aſhes: but ſith it was the will of God it ſhould be ſo, who ordereth all things according to the counſel of his will, let all the Earth be ſilent before him, let us be ſtill and know that he is God. Who ſhould rule the World but he that made it, and that upholds it by the Word of his Power? He can do us no wrong if he would, ſuch is his eſſential holineſs, (which alſo makes it impoſſible for him to lie) he would do us no wrong if he could, ſuch is his infinite juſtice. He can do nothing but what is conſiſtent with infinite wiſdome, patience, goodneſs, mercy, and every perfection, and how unreaſonable is it not to ſubmit to that which is con-

consistent with all of these? so doubtless was the burning of our renowned City (as ghastly a spectacle as it is to behold) else it had never come to pass.

O Lord I am sensible that I have need of line upon line, precept upon precept, and example upon example, to teach me this hard lesson of submission to thee (though the object of that submission seem to be only my condition in this life) for I no where finde that thou requirest me and others to be willing to perish everlastingly) Thou knowest how much thy glory and the comfort of thy poor Creatures are concerned in it, that we should know how to resign up our selves to thee; inable us to be contented with whatsoever thy will hath been or shall be concerning us, and then be pleased to do with us (as to this World) what thou wilt.

DISCOURSE. XXIV.

Of taking occasion by this, to study the vanity and uncertainty of all earthly things.

IF a glorious City turned into a ruinous heap in four dayes time, when no visible enemy was at hand to do it: if the reducing hundreds of Families to almost beggery, that liv'd in good fashion in less than one week before, by an unexpected meanes, and in a way not possible to be foreseen: if knocking a Nation out of joynt all of a sudden (like a body that had been tortured upon a Rack) be not loud Sermons of the vanity and uncertainty of all earthly things, surely

there will be none ſuch till that time ſhall come, that St. *Peter* ſpeaks of, 2 *Pet.* 3. 10. *When the Heavens ſhall paſs away with a great noiſe, and the Elements ſhall melt with fervent heat, the Earth alſo, and the works that are therein ſhall be burnt up.* What a Comment was this providence upon that Text, *Pſal.* 39. 5. *Verily every Man at his beſt ſtate is altogether vanity*? How did it evince the *Pſalmiſt* to ſpeak right, *Pſal.* 62. 9. Not only when he ſaith, *Men of low degree are vanity*, (which moſt people do believe) but alſo when he ſaith, *Men of high degree are a lie, to be laid in the balance they are altogether lighter than vanity* (which few aſſent unto.) If things are called vanity (as moſt properly they are) from their aptneſs, to vaniſh and diſappear, from their taking wings and flying away from us: then ſurely the vaniſhing and flying away of a famous City upon the wings of the fire, and of the wind, (which were the bellowes inraging that fire) are a great argument of the vanity of all things here below.

Amongſt all ſublunary things, what could be thought to have more ſtability and certainty in it than the City of *London* had, as to the body and bulk of it? elſe why were ſo many wiſe men willing to venture all they had in the world in that one bottome? Moſt men dreampt as little of the burning of all, or the moſt of *London*, as of burning up the whole World before the day of Judgment: and it is like did think it not only improbable, but upon the matter impoſſible, as not doubting, but if fire did happen in any part of the City, one or more, there would be men and meanes enough to extinguiſh it (as they uſe to do) This Mountain was thought to ſtand

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ſo ſtrong, as that it could not be removed in ſuch a way as it was. He that had ſaid, but what if the whole City ſhould be burnt? would have been anſwered by moſt men, with the Proverb, *what if the ſkie ſhould fall?* yet have we ſeen this *famous City* wither like *Jonah's Gourd*, though not in one day, yet in a very few. May we not apply to it thoſe words of *David*, uſed in another caſe, we have lately ſeen it in great power, ſpreading it ſelf like a green Bay Tree: we paſſed by, and loe it was not, we ſought it, and it could not be found. *Pſal.* 37. 35. Who can but think of the *Pſalmiſt's* expreſſions upon this occaſion, *Pſal.* 74. 5. *A man was famous according as he had lifted up Axes upon the thick Trees*, (*viz.* in order to building the Temple: ſo likewiſe to build the City, or any part of it) *but now they break down the carved work thereof with Axes and Hammers*: ſuch execution hath the Fire done, that greater could not have been done, nor yet ſo great by Axes and Hammers, and *verſ.* 7. and 8. *They have caſt Fire into the Sanctuary, they have burnt up the Synagogues of God in the Land.* We read of *Sodom's* being *overthrown in a moment and no hands ſtayed on her*, *Lam.* 4. 6. Was it not ſo with *London*? Is any Man's life ſo certain as the continuance of *London* was thought to be? Who did not expect that both he and his ſhould have been in their Graves before *London* had come to lie in aſhes? who thought not that the City, which had ſurvived many ages paſt, would alſo have ſurvived many ages to come? who would not have thought that a Leaſe for ſo long as *London* ſhould ſtand, had been more durable than if it had run for the lives of a hundred men?

yet even in it have we ſeen thoſe words fulfilled, *Iſa.* 40. 6. *All fleſh is graſs, and all the goodlineſs thereof as the flower of the Field. Pſal.* 90. 6. *In the morning it flouriſheth and groweth up, in the evening it is cut down and withered.*

But may ſome ſay, *Land* is certain, though houſes be caſual, neither can moth eat it, nor ruſt corrupt it, nor theeves ſteale it, nor yet fire conſume it; for that matter, all that can be ſaid, Land is like to ſtand where it is, but that it will alwayes abide by the preſent and proper owners of it, that is as uncertain as any thing elſe. If *Ahab* have a minde to *Naboth*'s Vineyard, *Jezabel* knowes how to get it for him, though *Naboth* would not part with it. It is but paper and parchment that men have to ſhow for their Lands, and are not they more eaſily conſumed than a whole City: or may they not be loſt or ſtollen, or ſo baſled by the artifice of corrupt Lawyers, that they ſhall do us no good? we ſee then that which was lookt upon by all men to be as great a certainty as this World hath any, is dried up like a deceitfull Brook in Summer. *Job* 6. 17.

O Lord, when I remember theſe things, I cannot but pour out my ſoul in me, and my ſupplication unto thee, ſaying, O Lord, give me not my portion in theſe things, which may ſo eaſily be taken away, ſuffer me not to ſet my heart upon things, of which it is ſaid, they are not, becauſe they take wings & flie away, but give me to inherit durable ſubſtance, (or that which *is*, as thou haſt called it, Heb. *teſh. Prov.*) Fire me out of the love of the World, by what thou haſt done to the City, and give me to minde what thou

thou haſt ſaid, 1 *John* 2. 15. *Love not the world, nor the things of the world, for the world paſſeth away, &c.* Give me to conſider how miſerable I am, if I have intereſt in no good things, but thoſe which one nights fire, or one daies trial at law may take away from me? I ſee we are all tenants at will, as to all we have in this world, and thou ſealeſt a leaſe of ejectment when thou pleaſeſt: but there is an inheritance incorruptible, and that fadeth not away, reſerved for thy people in the heavens. Oh give us here an abundant entrance into it, and hereafter the endleſs poſſeſſion of it. And as experience ſheweth us the vanity of all things here below, let us by means of faith, which is the ſubſtance of things hoped for, and evidence of things not ſeen, foreſee the reality, and in part fore-enjoy the ſweetneſs of thoſe better things that are above.

DISCOURSE XXV.

Of not being too eager upon the world, after this great loſs.

I Am jealous over ſome men (pardon me, a godly jealouſie) leſt they ſhould verefie that *Proverb*, which ſaith, that *Faſting from two meales, makes the third a glutton.* Trading hath been twice interrupted of late; once by the Plague, and ſince by the Fire; and now it is much to be feared leſt men ſhould fall too eagerly to it again, like thoſe that having been al-

moſt ſtarved, when they come at meat again, are apt to ſurfeit. Now God hath burnt your former houſes, take heed of burning your own fingers, in hiring new ones at too great Fines and Rents. Remember the words of God to *Baruch, Jer.45.4. Behold that which I have built will I break down; and ſeekeſt thou great things for thy ſelf?* See the world better, before you have more to do with it than you needs muſt; Children that draw a breaſt too hard, that hath but little in it, what do they but fill themſelves with wind? Truſt not your ſelves too far with the world, for it is a ſlippery thing, and may ſerve you ſuch another trick: who would toile, as in the Fire, to lay up treaſure for another Fire to conſume? Ought *they that have wives* (and not much more they that have trades) *to be as though they had none? 1 Cor. 7. 30. Becauſe the faſhion of the world paſſeth away.* A moderate care to recruit ſome part of our loſſes is not to be blamed: but an immoderate, will do more hurt than good. *They that will be rich* (be it after great loſſes) *fall into temptation and a ſnare, 1 Tim. 6. 9.* It is not for us to ſay we will be rich, then of all times, when God hath ſaid in effect that he will have us poor: though wait upon his providence we may and muſt, for a convenient ſubſiſtance:

O Lord, thou haſt given us fair warning not to ſet our hearts upon this world, or flie too faſt after that which flies ſo faſt away from us. Sin and the world are two enemies we are not bound to love; yea, we are bound not to love the firſt at all, the laſt, much. Seeing it is the pleaſure of God to take the world from us, let us take off our hearts from it. If God withdraw

ſpiritual

ſpiritual mercies, it is to make us purſue them more eagerly; but if he withdraw temporal, it is that we ſhould proſecute them more indifferently. It being one of thy deſigns, O Lord, in taking part of this world from us, to make us mind this leſs, and the next, more; far be it from us upon that account to minde this world more, and that which is to come, leſs; or to rob our general calling, to recruit our particular; when we ſhould rather borrow time from our particular callings which thou haſt diminiſhed, to add to our general. *O Lord*, teach us neither to deal with a ſlack hand (which thou haſt ſaid, tends to poverty) not yet to be ſo hot upon it, as if we were reſolved by the fire of our zeal for the world, certainly to repair what thou haſt impaired by the fire of thine anger: but give us rather to ſtudy how contentedly and comfortably we may live for leſs, than how we may regain and repoſſeſs as much as ever.

DISCOURSE XXVI.

Of chuſing rather to continue under affliction, than to eſcape by ſin.

IT is the greateſt miſery that attends a ſuffering condition, that it tempts men to ſeek a deliverance by ſin. *Agur* gives this reaſon why he deprecated poverty, *Prov.* 30. 9. *Leſt* (ſaith he) *I be poor and ſteal, and take the name of the Lord in vain.* Even Theft its ſelf is a taking of Gods name in vain, as being a practical denying of Gods alſufficiency to provide for us, without

out the interpoſition of our ſin, and there-unto are men tempted by extream poverty. It were eaſie to recount many indirect courſes which are taken by men and women, utterly to defend themſelves againſt want. Some betake themſelves to unlawful trades, no leſs than proſtituting their own bodies, or the bodies of others, therewith to provide for their backs and bellies; ſome have other trades as bad as that (if ſo bad can be;) others uſe lawful callings unlawfully, vending bad commodities, taking unconſcionable rates, pinching thoſe poor people that work to them. Some go the way of open violence, (as by robbery, extortion, oppreſſion,) others the no leſs diſhoneſt way, of ſecret fraud and couſenage. Some are tempted to break, not becauſe they cannot pay their debts and live: but becauſe they cannot live ſo as they were wont to do if they ſhould pay their debts, and therefore they will rather defraud their Creditors, than their *Genius*. Some, if God take away from them but ſome part of what he hath given them, reſolve to lend him nothing (in that ſenſe as they who give to the poor, are ſaid to lend to the Lord) not but that they are more able than ſome others who are careful to maintain good works, and to be very charitable: but becauſe they are not ſo able as they have been; as who ſhould ſay, if God impair his wonted bounty towards them, (though much of his bounty be ſtill extended towards them, howbeit not ſo much as formerly) they will put an imbargo upon all their charity, nothing ſhall [illegible] out to the poor, if there come not into them ſo much as formerly. It

ſounds

ſounds like taking ſome kind of revenge upon God himſelf.

I wiſh the words of *David*, *Pſal.* 10. 9. were not applicable to many, where ſpeaking of a wicked man, he ſaith, *He lieth in wait to catch the poor: he doth catch the poor when he draweth him into his net.* Are there not many that work upon the neceſſities of poor men, and grinde their faces when they have them at an advantage? Theſe are ſome of the ill methods and artifices whereby too many attempt to make up their loſſes. But better it were to be alwaies poor, than to grow rich by ſuch waies as theſe. Where ſin is made uſe of as the cure of Affliction, the remedy is worſe than the diſeaſe, and it is as our *Proverb* ſpeaks, *Out of the Frying-pan into the Fire.* Deliverance obtained by ſin is like *Jacob's* bleſſing procured by lying, which was many waies imbittered to him: For none of all the *Patriarchs* had ſo many croſſes as he. Sin is a worſe labyrinth than affliction: worſe to ſtay in, and worſe to get out of. So *David* found it when he would have concealed his ſhame in the matter of *Bathſhebah* by making *Uriah* drunk, that would not do his buſineſs, neither did he ſee how he could effect his deſign without killing him: and when that was done, he was in a worſe caſe than ever; for then watered he his couch with his tears, then were his bones broken. So *Peter* thought to have ſecured himſelf, by denying his maſter: but that denying coſt him dearer than it is probable his owning of Chriſt at that time would have done. All that men truly get by ſin, they may put in their eyes (as we ſay) and not ſee the worſe. What had become

become of *Job* if he had followed the wicked counsel which his wife gave him, whereby to put an end to his troubles? saying, *Curse God and die.*

Let those that are tempted to repair their losses by indirect means, think but of three Texts. The first is, *Prov.* 21. 6. *The getting of treasure by a lying tongue, is a vanity tossed to and fro of them that seek death.* The next is, *Prov.* 22. 16. *He that oppresseth the poor to encrease his riches, shall surely come to want.* The last is, *Jer.* 17. 11. *As the Partridge sitteth on eggs, and hatcheth them not: so he that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his daies, and at his end shall be a fool.* But as for those that chuse rather to suffer than to sin, God taketh a particular care of them: witness *Daniel*, preserved in the Lions den; and the three children in the fiery furnace. They that sin under sufferings, what do they but take in more lading in a storm, whereas the usual and best way is, to cast out part of that lading which they had taken in before.

O Lord, I desire to depend upon this, that thou knowest how to deliver the righteous out of temptations; and that without their unrighteousness. Let not the lot of the wicked so long rest upon the backs of thy servants, as to make them put forth their hands to wickedness. Cause us to believe, that thy blessing only so maketh rich, as to add no sorrow therewith. and let us never forget or misdoubt what thou saidst to thy servant *Abraham*, I am God all-sufficient, walk thou before me and be upright. Doubtless a little which a righteous man hath

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is better than great treasures of the wicked. Let me ever be perswaded (as I hope I now am) that innocent poverty is much more elegible than ill gotten prosperity.

DISCOURSE XXVII.

Of preparing for our own dissolution, now we have seen the destruction of London.

O *London*, art thou gone before us? who thought to have seen thee in ashes first? who thought that the stakes of his Tabernacle would not be removed, and the cords thereof loosned, whilst thou wert left standing like a strong tower not easie to be demolished, and as like as any thing to endure till time its self shall be no more? How much less difficult had it been for a burning feaver to have consumed me (and thousands more such as I am) than for such a fire, as did that work to have consum'd *London*? For *is my strength the strength of stones? or is my flesh of brass?* as *Job* speaks, *chap.* 6. 12. Such was the strength of that *City*, and yet see where it lieth. As for *London* its self, it was a glorious *City*, beautiful for scituation, and I had almost called it the joy of the whole earth, alluding to what was said of Mount *Sion*, *Psal.* 48. 2. (to be sure the joy of the three Kingdoms) but the inhabitants of *London*, as to their bodies, what were they but dwellers in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust, which might be crusht before the moth? *Job* 4. 19. Who look not upon

strong

ſtrong-built houſes as things more durable than their inhabitants? who did not hope if they were their own, to tranſmit them to their children, and childrens children to many generations? And yet we ſee that they are in the duſt before us. And is not that a fair warning to us, as it might be to an aged infirm perſon, to follow a young luſtie perſon to the grave. If this were done to the green tree, what may not the dry expect? If the beſt houſes in *London* were half a year ſince not really worth three years purchaſe, how ever men did value them, how ſmall a purchaſe may our lives be worth for ought we know? Many might reckon to lay their ruins (their carcaſſes I mean) in the bowels of *London*, but who ever thought to have had his carcaſs interred in the ruins of *London*? as ſome have had already. A little time hath produced a greater change than our great change would be, why then ſhould we put the evil day of death far off? why ſhould we promiſe our ſelves length of daies, as if the preſent year might not put a period to us, as well as to a ſtrong and ſtately City, that was likely to have out-laſted a thouſand of us.

How reaſonable is it then for us whoſe lives are but a vapor, to expect but a ſhort continuance in this world, at leaſtwiſe not to expect any long duration here; to ſay with the *Apoſtle*, *The time is ſhort*. Yea, how needful is it we ſhould take the counſel which *Chriſt* gives, *Luke* 12.35. *Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning, And your ſelves like men that wait for the Lord, that when he knocketh they may open to him immediately*. As there is no preparing for death with-

without thinking of it, ſo who can think of death, and not deſire to prepare for it? if the deſtruction of *London* admoniſh us to number our dayes, it doth no leſs, to apply our hearts to wiſdome. Who would be willing to die unpreparedly, that thinks at all of dying?

That you may know what I mean by preparedneſs for death, take this account. Then is a man fit to die, when he is in a condition to die both ſafely and comfortably: when he is tranſlated from ſpiritual death to life, and knowes himſelf ſo to be. He that is not ſo tranſlated, hath no fitneſs at all to die, he that is and knows it not, is fit in one ſenſe, and unfit in another: is partly fit, but not ſo compleatly, but he that both is ſo, and knows himſelf to be ſo, hath all the eſſentials of fitneſs for death, though if a man be in the actual exerciſe of grace and diſcharge of his duty, it muſt be confeſſed that doth give him ſomewhat more of an actual and accompliſhed fitneſs, than the meer habits of grace and of aſſurance can do. He that hath made his calling and election ſure, he that is ſealed up to the day of redemption by the ſpirit of promiſe, he that can ſay with *Paul*, he knows in whom he hath truſted, and as St. *John*, we know that we are of God; I ſay is fit to die. He that hath not that fitneſs for death, but yet deſires to have it, let him make it part of every daies work to get it; let him be daily learning how to die. Hath God afforded no meanes whereby to bring us to a fitneſs for death? what is prayer, reading the Scriptures, hearing the word, converſe with Chriſtians, examining our ſelves, ſerious meditation of ſpiritual and eternal

things,

things, avoiding the occasions of evil, keeping our hearts with all diligence? Is it likely that a man should conscionably use all these meanes, and not attain the end of them? why then is faith said to come by hearing the word preached? why is the word called the ministration of the spirit? why saith *Paul* to the *Galathians*, *Received ye not the spirit by the hearing of faith*? *Gal.*3.2. why did *Christ* counsel men to search the Scriptures, seeming to approve their thinking, that in them we have eternal life? why doth *Christ* speak of our heavenly father, giving his spirit to them that ask him? why doth he say, *Ask and it shall be given you, seek and ye shall finde, knock and it shall be opened to you*, *Mat.*7.7. *For every one that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened*, *vers.* 8. why must all that come to God, believe that God is a rewarder of all them that seek him diligently? *Heb.* 11.6. It seems to consist but ill with such texts as these, for us to look upon the means which God hath appointed as insignificant and ineffectual. And seeing they are not so, let us diligently use them in order to our preparation for death, now at leastwise that God hath spared us so long as to see *London* laid in the dust before us.

Now God hath fired your nests over your heads (*dear friends and much lamented Citizens*) will not each of you say as *David*, *Psal.* 55.6. *O that I had wings like a Dove* (which is the embleme of innocency) *for then would I flie away, and be at rest*. I see no great reason we now have to be fond of life, if we were but fit to die. May we not say with *Solomon*, we have seen an end of all perfection? Seeing we have brought forth an

Icabod

Icabod (ſo far as concernes our ſelves only, and in reference to this World) what great matter had it been, if with *Eli*'s daughter in Law we had died in Childbed? Now who would not long to be diſſolved, as *Paul* did, if he could but ſay with him, *We know if our Earthly Houſe were diſſolved, we have a building of God, an Houſe not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens.* 2 *Cor.* 5. 1.

O ſee then as concerning Death, there are three leſſons to be learnt from this ſad providence, *viz.* to expect it, to prepare for it, and to be willing to it. To expect it, is the way to prepare for it: and when once prepared for it, we have no great reaſon, after ſuch a deſolation, to be unwilling to it.

O Lord I dare not ſay, as *Elijah* did, 1 *Kings* 19. 4. *It is enough, take away my life.* He might better ſay ſo than I. Poſſibly he foreſaw by a ſpirit of propheſie, that fiery Chariot which was intended to carry him to heaven. 2 *Kings* 2. 12. Yet neither he nor I may ſay ſo by way of diſcontent. O *Lord*, I have many things to deſire, as in reference to death, let me not die till I am willing, make me willing when I am fit, let me know I am fit when I am really ſo, that I may be willing, make me early fit, that I may be timely willing: yea deſirous to be diſſolved, and whenſoever I am deſirous to dye, let me alſo be contented to live, if thou have any work to do for me. Let me only deſire that thou maiſt be glorified in me, whether by life or death. *Lord* what work do I and ſome others make of dying, as if it were more for us to die, than for *London* to be burnt to aſhes. Did *Aaron* make any ſuch ſtir about it? Up he went to Mount *Hor*. *Moſes*

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ſtript him of his Garments, and put them upon Eleazar his Son: *Numb.* 20. 26. And me thinks he made no more of it, than if he had put off his cloaths to go to Bed, or than if with *Enoch*, he had been about to have been tranſlated, rather than to have ſeen death; or with *Chriſt* after his reſurrection, rather about to aſcend than to die. O *Lord* have not ſome of thy ſervants known the time of their approaching Death, and knowing it, called their friends about them, prayed together, ſung Pſalmes together, chearfully confer'd about that better world they were going to, took their ſolemn leave of all their relations and friends, as if they had only been about to travel into ſome far Country, from whence they were never like to return again, and then compoſed themſelves to die, as if they had only laid themſelves to ſleep, and commended their ſouls into thy hands with no leſs chearfulneſs and confidence, than Men do their bags and bonds into the hands of faithful friends? May I not (with ſubmiſſion) deſire to die upon the ſame termes? yet, if it may ſtand with thy bleſſed will, let me live to ſee *London* rebuilt in ſome competent meaſure: thy people re-united: *England* reſetled: Proteſtant Nations reconciled each to other: thy Goſpel every where ſpread: this Land a Mountain of holineſs, and a valley of viſion, or if not all, yea if none of theſe, at leaſtwiſe clearly to ſee and read my own name written in the book of life: then ſhall I ſay with good old *Simeon*, *Now letteſt thou thy ſervant depart in peace, for mine eyes have ſeen thy ſalvation.*

FINIS.